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THE

WORKS

OF MONSIEUR

Charles de Marguetel de Saint Denis,
seigneur de Saint-

(ST.) EVREMOND,

Made Engliſh from the French Original:

WITH THE

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR;

BY

MR. DES MAIZEAUX, F.R.S.

To which are added

The Memoirs of the Dutcheſs of Mazarin, &c.

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A CON-

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN M. DE ST. EVREMOND AND THE DUKE OF CANDALE.

I DO not pretend to entertain the Publick with my own Affairs. The World has no concern to know the misfortunes and accidents that have befallen me; but no man that is not in the ſpleen can take it ill, if I make ſome Reflections upon my paſt Life, and divert my mind from melancholy thoughts, to thoſe that are not altogether ſo diſagreeable. However, as it is extremely ridiculous for a man to talk always of himſelf, altho it be to himſelf; to avoid this impertinence, I will introduce ſeveral Perſons of great merit into this Diſcourſe, the very remembrance of whom will give me more ſatisfaction than I can expect from any Converſation, ſince I have had the

misfortune to loſe that of my Lord D'AUBIGNY [1].

At the time of the Prince of CONDE's Impriſonment [2], I had a great intimacy with the Duke of CANDALE. This commerce had nothing of deſign or intereſt in it; but was purely occaſioned by pleaſures and good-fellowſhip, and entertained by the bare ſatisfaction we took in one another's company. He had formerly lived in a ſtrict ſort of an amity with MORET [3], and the Chevalier DE LA VIEUVILLE; which VINEUIL called *the League*, by way of ridicule. Nor was this nickname altogether undeſerv'd: for they improved a thouſand trifles into ſecrets, made myſteries of the moſt inſignificant nothings, and met together in private, at leaſt ten times a day, without any other pleaſure, than that of being ſeparated from others. It was my good fortune to be admitted into their Confidence, which, at laſt, broke off without any occaſion for a rupture on either ſide.

Monſieur DE VARDES, when he went to the army, had left behind him a Miſtreſs at Paris [4], who was one of the moſt agreeable women in the world: ſhe had formerly had a Lover, and had been in love her ſelf; but as her tenderneſs was wholly exhauſted in her firſt Amours, it was impoſſible for her now to have a real Paſſion; ſo that ſhe ſtudied nothing but downright Gallantry, which ſhe manag'd with great art and addreſs, and cover'd with an air of ſimplicity; making the eaſineſs and freedom of her Wit paſs for Ingenuouſneſs and Plainneſs. As her Hiſtory was well known, ſhe had not the aſſurance to ſet up for a Prude; and, inſtead

[1] *My Lord d'Aubigny died in* 1665.
[2] *In the year* 1650.
[3] *Count Moret, eldeſt Brother to the Marquis de Vardes.*
[4] *Madam de St. Loup.*

inſtead of making a great figure in the world, ſhe choſe a retir'd Life, to which the preſent circumſtances of her fortune induc'd her, and carried on this ſeeming negligence with a great deal of cunning. She never went to the Louvre to diſpute Gallants with thoſe young Beauties, which make ſo great a noiſe in the world; but had addreſs enough to diſengage a Lover from their Charms; and was no leſs induſtrious to preſerve, than ſhe had been to gain him. She would not ſuffer him to maintain the leaſt correſpondence with any Woman of tolerable Beauty; and if he perform'd but common Civilities to his friends, ſhe would reproach him with throwing away that love upon others, which was only due to her ſelf. Private Pleaſures made her fear the loſs of her Lover; and ſhe was afraid of being forgotten in publick Diverſions. Above all, ſhe exclaim'd againſt the Entertainments of the Commandeur [5], in which men breath'd a certain air of freedom, inconſiſtent with a nice and refin'd Paſſion: in ſhort, if all your applications and thoughts did not center in her, ſhe complain'd of being abandon'd; and becauſe ſhe proteſted that ſhe was wholly yours, ſhe expected that you ſhould be entirely devoted to her.

Monſieur DE VARDES being abſent, could not maintain himſelf long in the affections of ſo tyrannick and humourſom a Miſtreſs. She ſurrender'd her ſelf, at firſt ſight, to the young Duke of CANDALE: nay, 'tis ſaid, that her deſign preceded the impreſſion which his preſence made, and that ſhe had reſolved to poſſeſs him, before ſhe had ſeen him. Monſieur DE VARDES was ſenſibly touch'd at this alteration in her, knowing it would rob him of a pleaſure that was very dear to him; however, like a man of honour, he made no noiſe

[5] *The Commandeur de Souvré.*

about it, looking upon the Duke of CANDALE with the diſcontent of a Rival, and not with the hatred of an Enemy.

MORET, whoſe gravity perſonated honour in every thing, looked upon himſelf as injured, in the perſon of his Brother, and improved that into a real Affront, which the party concerned took only for a bare Diſappointment. His complaints, at firſt, ran in a high ſtrain; but finding them ill received in the world, he altered his language, without altering his conduct. He ſaid, he was a very unhappy man, to be ſo little regarded by a perſon for whom he had all his life ſo great a conſideration; that the Duke of CANDALE was little to be pitied; that he would find thoſe that better deſerved his friendſhip; and that 'twas with a great concern that he ſaw himſelf obliged to look out for others, upon whom he might ſecurely depend. After this rate he talked in all Companies, with a ſeeming modeſty, which is a ſurer evidence of vanity, than a moderate degree of aſſurance. As for the Chevalier DE LA VIEUVILLE, he looked upon himſelf to be diſobliged, as ſoon as MORET thought ſo too; and partly by the natural heat of his Temper, and partly to pleaſe his Friend, he carried theſe expoſtulations higher than ever.

I kept the Duke of CANDALE company as uſual; and as he could not be without ſome one or other to unboſom himſelf, to he ſoon made me the confident of his Complaints upon the behaviour of theſe Gentlemen, and ſhortly after of his Paſſion for Madam DE ST. LOUP. In the heat of this new Confidence, he communicated to me the moſt trivial things that befel him; which, tho they appear weighty things to a Lover, are yet very indifferent to thoſe that are obliged to hear them. I ſeemed, however, to receive them as things of great

great importance, tho, in truth, I looked upon them as impertinent trifles. But his humour was agreeable, his deportment obliging, and his air ſo noble, that I took a pleaſure to behold him, at the ſame time when I took little or none at all to hear him talk. Till then, I had not the leaſt Deſign in my correſpondence with him. But when I found I had ſome authority with him, I thought it would not be amiſs to manage and cultivate the friendſhip of a Perſon, who was one day to make a conſiderable figure in the Kingdom; and ſo I made it my particular buſineſs to ſtudy him, and omitted nothing to engage him, on his moſt ſenſible ſide. I commended his Miſtreſs, without betraying my opinion, for indeed ſhe ſeemed to me exceeding amiable; and I blamed the behaviour of MORET, and of the Chevalier DE LA VIEUVILLE, who, in my judgment, had no manner of reaſon for what they did.

There are certain Inſinuations, which the leaſt artificial man may honeſtly make uſe of; and there is a Complaiſance to be practiſed, on occaſion, as far diſtant from flattery, as it is from rudeneſs. As I knew the Duke of CANDALETO be amorous in his Temper, I took care to ſuit my Converſation to it, and to entertain him with the moſt tender things I knew. His Humour was ſweet and delicate, and his Judgment was exact enough in things that required no great profoundneſs of thought to dive into them. Beſides his natural inclination, he bent his whole ſtudy that way, and I induſtriouſly furniſh'd him with proper ſubjects to employ that talent upon. Thus when we parted from one another, we did it without any of thoſe Diſguſts, in which Converſation generally ends; and as he was pleaſed with me, becauſe he was better pleaſed with himſelf, he daily increaſed his affec-

tion to me, in proportion to his being more delighted with himſelf.

Thoſe who expect Docility in others, ſeldom eſtabliſh the ſuperiority of their judgment, without diſcovering a troubleſom, imperious temper. Merit does not always make an impreſſion on the moſt honourable perſons; every one is jealous of his own deſerts, ſo that we cannot eaſily ſuffer thoſe of another. A mutual complaiſance, for the moſt part, gains our Affections; nevertheleſs, ſince we give this way as much as we receive, the pleaſure of being flatter'd is ſometimes dear-bought, by the violence we put upon our ſelves to flatter others. But he that commends, without expecting a return of the Compliment, doubly obliges us, by giving his commendations, and diſpenſing with ours. 'Tis a great ſecret, in a familiar commerce with other men, to turn them, as far and as honourably as we can, to the ſide of Self-love. When a man finds a fit opportunity to examine them, and makes them ſenſible of ſome talents in themſelves, which they knew nothing of before, they are ſecretly pleaſed at the diſcovery of this concealed merit, and are ſo much the more unwilling to part with us, as they deſire to be agreeable to themſelves.

I may, perhaps, juſtly incur cenſure for quitting particular things, to enlarge upon general Obſervations; and, indeed, I ſhould have been more careful to avoid it, if I could entertain the Publick with Affairs of great importance. But as I only pretend to talk to my ſelf upon matters of little conſequence, I do by my ſelf as I have frequently done by others; and aiming at nothing elſe, but barely to pleaſe my ſelf, I employ my Invention to find out matter of ſatisfaction. I will, therefore, abandon my ſelf to my fancy, provided it does not carry me into extravagancies; for irregularity and conſtraint ought

to

to be equally avoided: but becauſe I will not ramble too far, return to the Narration I begun.

The firſt thing the Court did after the Confinement of the Prince of CONDE', was to go with ſome forces into Normandy, to turn the Ducheſs of LONGUEVILLE out of that Province, and to lodge thoſe Governments in other hands, which were then poſſeſs'd by the Creatures of that Family. I took this Journey with the Duke of CANDALE, and for two days together, when the roads and weather were extremely bad, we were ſcarce one hour aſunder; and our Converſation was ſo much the more entertaining, as it ran upon variety of matters.

After we had talk'd of his Amours, and thoſe of other perſons, till the ſubject was quite exhauſted, and had diſcours'd indifferently of all ſorts of pleaſures, we fell inſenſibly into the miſerable condition wherein the Prince was at preſent, after he had acquir'd ſo much Glory in the world, and had paſs'd thro' ſo many conſiderable Poſts. I told him, 'That ſo great and ſo unfortunate a Prince ought 'to be univerſally lamented: that, in truth, his 'conduct had been ſomething diſreſpectful to the 'Queen, and no leſs diſobliging to the Cardinal; 'but that theſe were Faults againſt the Court, and 'not Crimes againſt the State, which ought not to 'obliterate thoſe important ſervices that he had 'done the Nation in general: that his ſervices had 'ſupported the Cardinal, and ſecur'd him in that 'power, which his Eminence now employ'd to 'ruin him: that France had, perhaps, been reduc'd 'to the laſt extremities in the beginning of the Regency, had it not been for the Battle of Rocroy, 'which was intirely owing to the Prince's conduct: 'that all the ill ſteps the Court had made after 'the Battle of Lens, were without his privity and 'direction, and that he alone had retriev'd Affairs

'in the War of Paris: that after ſo many ſignal 'Services, the offence he had given, was wholly to 'be charg'd on the impetuoſity of his Temper, 'which he was not maſter of, but that all his de-'ſigns and actions manifeſtly tended to the Grandeur 'of the King, and Advantage of the whole Nation. 'I don't know, *continu'd I*, what the Court propoſe 'to gain by his confinement; but this I am certain 'of, that nothing could be more welcome to the 'Spaniards.'

I am oblig'd, ſays the Duke of CANDALE, *to the Prince, for a thouſand Civilities I have receiv'd from him, notwithſtanding his ſpleen againſt the Duke of* ESPERNON, *my father. However, I have, perhaps, ſhew'd too grateful a ſenſe of ſuch light obligations; and I know full well, that I have been blam'd for not engaging myſelf far enough in the intereſts of my Family. But let the World ſay what they pleaſe, all thoſe diſcourſes ſhall not hinder me from being his moſt humble ſervant; neither ſhall his preſent Diſgrace keep me from being ſo ſtill. But conſidering in what circumſtances I ſtand at Court, I can only grieve in private for his misfortunes: this, indeed, is unſerviceable to him in his preſent condition, but it might be fatal to me, if I made it appear.*

'You have expreſs'd your ſelf on this occaſion, '*ſaid I to him*, like a Perſon of Honour, and 'tis ſo 'much the more generous in you, becauſe the Im-'priſonment of the Prince is the moſt advantageous 'thing you cou'd have deſired. I look upon you 'at preſent, to be the moſt conſiderable Perſon in 'France, if you have a mind to be ſo: our Princes 'of the Blood are ſent to the Bois de Vincennes, 'from whence, in all probability, they will not 'come out in haſte. Monſieur DE TURENNE, 'and Monſieur DE BOUILLON, are gone off to 'ſerve them. The Duke of NEMOURS, as much 'a Man of Honour as he is, ſignifies juſt nothing,

'and

'and does not know at preſent what party to take. 'The Duke of GUISE is a Priſoner in Spain; all 'the reſt of our Noblemen are either ſuſpected, or 'neglected at leaſt, by the Cardinal. As affairs 'ſtand at preſent, if you don't put a juſt value 'upon the eminent rank you hold in the World, 'and the good qualities of your Perſon, do not 'blame Fortune in the leaſt, but e'en thank your 'ſelf, for being wanting to your ſelf.'

He liſten'd to me with great attention; and being more affected with my diſcourſe than I imagin'd he wou'd have been, he thank'd me very heartily for the hints I gave him. He told me frankly, that his Youth and his Pleaſures had hitherto hindred him from applying himſelf to buſineſs; but that he was reſolv'd to ſhake off this lazy unactive Life, and to ſet every wheel a going, in order to make himſelf conſiderable. *I will*, continued he, *communicate a ſecret to you, which I never yet imparted to any one; you cannot imagine how much I am in the Cardinal's good graces. You know, that he intends I ſhou'd marry one of his Nieces, and 'tis commonly believed, that his good inclinations to me are grounded upon the project of this Alliance. I my ſelf aſcribe part of his kindneſs to it; but either I am exceedingly miſtaken, or elſe he has an unaccountable fondneſs for my Perſon. I will truſt you with a greater ſecret ſtill than this, which is, that I don't perceive in my ſelf the leaſt inclination to love him; and to deal plainly with you, I am as cold to his Eminence, as his Eminence is to the other Courtiers.*

'I had much rather, *ſaid I to him*, that you really loved him, for you'll find it a difficult matter 'to conceal your true Sentiments from a perſon of 'his penetration. If you will be advis'd by me, ſee 'him but ſeldom in private; and when you are 'oblig'd to do it, entertain him with your devotion to him in general, without deſcending to nice

'nice particulars, which may give him leiſure to 'ſift you, and an opportunity to know you. When 'the King and Queen are with him, when he ſeeks 'to divert himſelf with the ordinary Courtiers, ne-'ver fail to make your appearance among them; 'and there endeavour, by the moſt complaiſant 'and winning carriage towards him, to ſecure that 'Friendſhip, which he is diſpos'd, on his part, to 'cultivate. If he was really inclin'd to have a 'Favourite, his familiarity wou'd be very advan-'tageous to you; but as 'tis impoſſible his affec-'tion ſhould be ſo diſintereſted, as not to be mix'd 'with deſign, a frequent correſpondence with him, 'will make him diſcover your weak ſide, before 'you are in the leaſt acquainted with his. Let a 'perſon of your age be maſter of never ſo much 'diſſimulation, yet he'll find it a great diſadvan-'tage to have all his actions ſcann'd by a prying 'old Miniſter, who is ſuperior to him, as well by 'the eminence of his Poſt, as that of his Expe-'rience. Take my word for't, Sir, 'tis dangerous 'to ſee a ſkilful man too often, when the difference, 'and frequently the claſhing of Intereſts will not 'permit us to repoſe an entire confidence in him. 'If this maxim ought to be receiv'd by other Na-'tions, much more ought it to be eternally prac-'tis'd in ours, where our penetration to diſ-'cover others, is much greater than our diſſimu-'lation to conceal our ſelves. Don't preſume there-'fore that you are able to combat the Cardinal 'at his own weapons, or to vie in cunning and 'fineſs with him. Be ſatisfy'd with endeavouring 'to make your ſelf as agreeable to him as you 'can, and leave the reſt to be brought about by 'his own inclination. Inclination is a pleaſant mo-'tion of the Soul, which is therefore the dearer 'to us, becauſe it ſeems to be purely of our own 'growth. It is the product of our tenderneſs,

'which

'which fondly cheriſhes it with pleaſure: in which 'particular it differs from Eſteem, which is of fo- 'reign extraction, and maintains the ground it has 'won upon us, not by the favour of our own opi- 'nion, but by the juſtice we are oblig'd to pay to 'virtuous Perſons.

'We ſhall, in all probability, ſhortly ſee the 'time, when the Cardinal will have occaſion for 'the ſervices of thoſe about him: therefore you 'muſt make your ſelf conſider'd by him as a ſer- 'viceable man, after you have gain'd his love by 'being agreeable. The ſureſt way for you to be 'entirely in his favour, is to let him ſee, that by 'making you his Friend, he will conſult his inte- 'reſt, as well as gratify his affection: and you 'will infallibly ſucceed in your deſign, by pro- 'miſing him the aſſiſtance of the credit and au- 'thority which you will gain, by ſteering a diffe- 'rent courſe from that of the Duke of ESPER- 'NON, without departing from his Intereſts, which 'ought always to be your own. 'Tis happy for 'you, that nature has given you a humour direct- 'ly oppoſite to his. Nothing in the univerſe can 'be more contrary, than the ſweetneſs of your 'Temper, and the auſterity of his; than your com- 'plaiſant Carriage, and his ſplenetick Roughneſs; 'in ſhort, than your inſinuating Addreſs, and his 'haughty imperious Behaviour. Let me therefore 'adviſe you to follow your own natural temper, 'but take care not to be miſled by any blaze 'of falſe Glory. It is no eaſy matter to diſtinguiſh 'the falſe from the true; an ill-grounded Haugh- 'tineſs often paſſes for greatneſs of Soul; and as 'we are too nice in whatever regards our Qua- 'lity, ſo we ſhew leſs concern than we ought for 'great things, which better deſerve our conſide- 'tion. The true Character of the Duke of Es- 'PERNON, unleſs I am mightily miſtaken, is

'this: in the Reſpect that he demands, in the de-
'voirs that are paid him, he can eaſily forget what
'is owing to the Governor, and to the Colonel[6],
'provided you pay that to the Duke of ESPER-
'NON which does not belong to him. I don't
'pretend that Perſons of great Quality ought not
'to value themſelves upon being diſtinguiſh'd by
'their Rank, but then they ſhould endeavour to me-
'rit this diſtinction, and not preſumptuouſly arro-
'gate it to themſelves.

'It would be a ſcandalous thing, for a man
'tamely to part with any Privileges acquir'd by the
'merits and reputation of his Predeceſſors; nor
'can he maintain theſe Rights with too much re-
'ſolution, when he is left in poſſeſſion of them;
'but it is not the ſame with new pretenſions,
'which are to be eſtabliſh'd by a nice obliging ad-
'dreſs, before the world takes any notice of them.
'In ſuch a caſe, we muſt firſt make our applica-
'tion to others, that they may afterwards inſen-
'ſibly do the ſame by us; and, inſtead of aſſuming
'by Arrogance, what may be deny'd with Juſtice,
'a man of true conduct will leave no method un-
'try'd, to procure that to be given him, which
'he does not demand.

'Be complaiſant, obliging, and liberal: let eve-
'ry man find with you both his Convenience and
'Satisfaction; and the world will, of its own ac-
'cord, put that into your hands, which you will
'unſucceſsfully demand by an affected Haughtineſs.
'No one thinks it much to pay reſpect, when it
'comes voluntarily from him, becauſe it lies in
'his power whether he will pay it or no; and be-
'cauſe he thinks he rather gives you teſtimonies
'of

[6] *The Duke of Eſpernon was then Governor of Guienne, and Colonel General of the French Infantry.*

'of his Friendſhip than of his Duty. The jealouſy 'of maintaining one's Liberty, is common to all 'Mankind, but different people make it to conſiſt 'in different things. Some throw off all manner of 'Superiority; and with ſome others, the choice of 'their Superiors ſupplies the place of Liberty. 'The French particularly are of this humour: 'equally impatient of Authority and Freedom, they 'won't have a Maſter put upon them without re-'luctance; nor can they continue their own Maſters 'without diſguſt. This makes them conſider how 'to beſtow themſelves; and being over-ſatisfy'd 'with the diſpoſal of their own wills, they ſubmit 'with pleaſure to a Maſter of their own chuſing. 'This, generally ſpeaking, is our natural Temper, 'which you ought to conſult, rather than your 'own, in the Conduct you are to obſerve in the 'world.

'There are two things among us, which diſtin-'guiſh a Man from the reſt of the World: the 'firſt, is the open Favour of the King; the ſecond, 'an acknowledg'd Merit in War. Favour, which 'in Spain does not abate the punctilios about Pre-'cedency, removes abundance of conteſts in France, 'where every one wholly purſues his own Intereſt, 'under the ſpecious pretence of honouring the 'confidence or inclination of his Prince. The moſt 'corrupted perſons, whoſe number is very great, 'carry their Servitude where they hope to find 'their Fortune; and thoſe who leaſt devote them-'ſelves to others, yet, for all that, pretend to ſome 'merit by their Submiſſions. There are, indeed, 'Men of falſe generoſity, that take a pride in de-'ſpiſing the Miniſtry; and there are fierce Spirits, 'that think themſelves men of reſolution: but we 'have few men of addreſs and dexterity enough 'to maintain their dignity in the management of 'their affairs. To take it right, the Favourites,

'with

'with us carry the world before them, if the 'Court does not depart from its receiv'd maxims. 'As for martial Merit, 'tis of extraordinary im- 'portance; and when a man has worthily com- 'manded great Armies, the impreſſion of this au- 'thority ſtill continues with him, and keeps its 'ground, even at the Court it ſelf. We honour, 'with pleaſure, a General, under whom we have 'acquir'd honour; and even thoſe who gain'd but 'very little of it, in their ſofter moments remem- 'ber, with delight, their paſt fatigues. We en- 'tertain our ſelves with our paſt Actions, tho we 'are idle for the preſent; we call to mind the 'dangers we have run, in times of ſecurity; and 'the image of War never preſents it ſelf to us, 'even in Peace, but we think both of the com- 'mand that has been exercis'd over us, and the 'obedience we have paid. Now 'tis this merit of 'War, which you ought to be ambitious to at- 'tain; this ſhould be the ſcope of all your endea- 'vours, in order to get, one day, the command 'of an Army. A poſt ſo noble, and ſo glorious, 'equals Subjects to Sovereigns in authority; and as 'it ſometimes makes a private Man a Conqueror, 'it may make the greateſt Prince the moſt miſe- 'rable Man upon earth, if he neglects a Virtue 'ſo neceſſary to ſupport his Fortune. After you 'have carefully regulated your conduct for the 'Court, and animated your ambition for the Wars, 'it will then be neceſſary for you to procure your 'ſelf Friends, whoſe well-eſtabliſh'd Reputation 'may contribute to fix yours, and who will cry 'up your new application to buſineſs, when they 'ſee you give your ſelf up to it in good ear- 'neſt.

'Of all the men I know, there are none whom 'I ſhould deſire you to be more thorowly ac-

'quainted

'quainted with, than Monſieur DE PALUAU[7], 'and Monſieur DE MIOSSENS[8]. The intimate 'friendſhip I have, both with the one and the other, 'may, perhaps, incline you to ſuſpect that I am 'partial in their commendation: but I deſire you 'to believe no ſuch matter; and take my word 'for't, you will not eaſily find two Perſons of their 'ſincerity and honour in the world. I own to 'you, however, that the Marquis DE CREQUI'S[9] 'Friendſhip ſeems to me preferable to any other. 'His generous and lively warmth for his Friends; 'his plain and unaffected Sincerity, make me have 'an infinite eſteem for him. Beſides, his noble Am-'bition, his Courage, his Genius in Military Affairs, 'and his univerſal Knowledge, add to our Friend-'ſhip a particular conſideration for him. We may 'give him, without the leaſt partiality, that noble 'Character which was beſtow'd upon one of the 'Antients; *ita ut ad id unum natus eſſe videretur 'quod aggrederetur.* When his choice determin'd 'him to his preſent employment, nature had equal-'ly prepar'd him for all; he being capable of a 'hundred different things, and as fit for any pro-'feſſion as his own. He might acquire Reputa-'tion by Learning, if he had not reſolv'd to gain 'it wholly by Arms. A noble principle of Am-'bition does not admit little Vanities: however, 'he is not leſs curious for it; and as in his pri-'vate ſtudies he finds a particular pleaſure in im-'proving himſelf; ſo to the great advantages of 'his Knowledge, he joins the merit of conceal-'ing it diſcreetly. Perhaps you would not expect

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[7] *Philip de Clerembaut, Count de Paluau, was made a Mareſchal of France in* 1653. *He died in* 1665.

[8] *Caſar Phœbus d'Albret, Count de Mioſſens, who was made a Mareſchal of France in* 1653, *and died in* 1676.

[9] *Francis de Crequi, Marquis de Marines, made a Mareſchal of France in* 1668.

'to find theſe Abilities in one of his youth, which 'we ſeldom meet in the moſt advanc'd Age; and 'I own, that by a favourable prepoſſeſſion, we 'ſometimes beſtow an Eſteem upon young men, 'which they don't deſerve: but then ſometimes 'we are too ſlow in doing juſtice to their Merits; 'forgetting to commend what they have worthily 'perform'd in a time of Exerciſe and Action, to 'praiſe them for what they have done in their 'Retirement and Repoſe. We ſeldom propor-'tion Reputation to a man's Virtue; and I have 'ſeen a thouſand Men in my time, that have been 'eſteem'd either for a Merit which they were not 'then in poſſeſſion of, or for that which they had 'already loſt: but in the Marquis DE CREQUI 'the caſe is quite otherwiſe. Whatever great ex-'pectations he gives us of what he may be here-'after, he lets us ſee at preſent, enough to ſatisfy 'the moſt difficult; ſo that he is the only perſon 'who may deſire that which others have reaſon to 'be afraid of, I mean the attention of Obſervers, 'and the delicacy of good Judges.

'A prime Miniſter, or Favourite, who would 'make it his buſineſs to find out at Court, ſome 'perſon worthy of his confidence, could not, in 'my opinion, pitch upon a Man that deſerves it 'more than Monſieur DE RUVIGNY[10]. You 'may, perhaps, find in ſome others, either brighter 'Parts, or ſome Actions that have made a greater 'noiſe than his: but to take a man altogether, and 'judge of him, not by any one period, but the 'whole tenor of his Life; I am acquainted with 'none, who better deſerves our eſteem, and with 'whom we may longer maintain a Confidence 'without ſuſpicion, and a Friendſhip without diſ-'guſt.

[10] *The Marquis de Ruvigny, Father to the late Earl of Galway.*

'guſt. Let People make what complaints they 'pleaſe of the corruption of the age, there are 'ſtill faithful Friends to be found: but the greateſt 'part of perſons of honour have a ſort of rigi- 'dity with them, which tempts people to prefer 'the inſinuations of a pretender, to ſuch an auſtere 'integrity. I have obſerv'd in thoſe Gentlemen, 'whom the world calls Solid and Wiſe, either a 'cumberſome Gravity, or a tireſome Dulneſs. 'Their good Senſe, which perhaps has been ſer- 'viceable to you once in your affairs, is ſo imper- 'tinent, as to diſturb your Pleaſures every day. 'However, a man is forc'd, in his own defence, 'to keep fair and even with theſe Gentlemen, tho 'they plague him never ſo much, in conſideration 'that he may have an occaſion, one time or other, 'to make uſe of their ſervice; and becauſe they 'never deceive you, when you confide in them, 'they think they have a right to teaze you when 'they pleaſe, altho you have nothing to truſt them 'with. The probity of Monſieur RUVIGNY, 'which makes him altogether as proper for a 'Confident as any body, is attended with nothing 'but what is eaſy and free: he is a cordial and 'agreeable Friend, whoſe Intimacy is ſolid, whoſe 'Familiarity is pleaſing, and whoſe Converſation is 'always ſenſible and improving.

'The confinement of the Prince has driven from 'the Court a conſiderable perſon, for whom I have 'an inexpreſſible value, I mean the Duke of LA 'ROCHEFOUCAULT, whoſe Courage and Con- 'duct will convince the world, that he is capable 'of every thing which he has a mind to pretend 'to. He will now find Reputation in a place, where 'his Intereſt will be but little concern'd; but his 'ill Fortune will have this good effect, as to make 'a full diſcovery of that Merit, which the reſerved- 'neſs of his temper has hitherto reveal'd to none

'but the niceſt obſervers. To whatever unhappy 'condition his deſtiny may reduce him, you will 'find him equally free from Weakneſs, and from 'a falſe Reſolution; being cool and fearleſs, in 'the moſt dangerous Circumſtances, yet not per-'ſevering obſtinately to play out a deſperate game, 'either out of heat of Reſentment, or an indiſcreet 'Bravery. In the common courſe of his life, his 'Commerce is civil and entertaining, his Conver-'ſation juſt and polite: all that he ſays is ſolid and 'well digeſted; and in his Writings, the eaſineſs 'of the expreſſion equals the clearneſs of the 'thought. I will not ſay any thing to you of Mon-'ſieur DE TURENNE; it would be too great a 'preſumption in a private man, to think that his 'ſingle opinion wou'd be conſider'd among pub-'lick teſtimonies, and that univerſal juſtice which 'whole Nations have pay'd to his merit. Be-'ſides, it ſignifies little to entertain you long about 'Perſons who are at ſo great a diſtance, and con-'ſequently cannot promote your Intereſt.

'I now return to Monſieur DE PALLUAU and 'M. DE MIOSSENS, in order to characterize them 'by thoſe Qualities, which may either be agreeable 'or uſeful to you. You will find in your acquain-'tance with Monſieur DE PALLUAU, all the a-'greeableneſs imaginable, and as much ſafety and 'ſecrecy as you can deſire. You muſt not expect 'to find in him the forwardneſs of giddy young 'fellows, who pretend to ſerve you, but whoſe 'imprudence you have more reaſon to fear, than 'to be fond of their heat. He will ever do punc-'tually, what you ſhall deſire of him; and I dare 'engage he will be wanting in none of thoſe of-'fices which a nice Courtier is capable of perform-'ing. If your Friendſhip is but once well knit, 'he will intereſt himſelf in your Conduct, and 'you will find him more ſerviceable to regulate

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'that by his advice, than proper to advance your 'affairs by his vigor. I ever found him a great 'enemy to falſe pretenders of Generoſity: and be- 'cauſe he has ever ridiculed the oſtentation of an 'affected Probity, ſome malicious people have con- 'cluded that he is no great admirer of Sincerity. 'But I dare venture to ſay, that I never knew in 'any man an Integrity more natural, than I have 'found in him. He uſes no deceit, no artifice, 'no fineſs with his Friends: he is devoted to 'the Court without any ſordid proſtitution; and 'endeavours to pleaſe, by a delicacy untainted with 'Adulation.

'An intimacy with Monſieur DE MIOSSENS 'will be more advantageous to your affairs; par- 'ticularly in this critical juncture, where almoſt 'every thing is owing to Induſtry. He cannot fail 'making a great figure at a Court, where there 'will be claſhing Intereſts, and great caballing. 'He will make no difficulty of opening himſelf 'to you at firſt ſight, out of hopes that you may 'ſerve him upon occaſion; and if you maintain a 'fair correſpondence with him, he will make it his 'particular buſineſs to have the honour of obliging 'you in all things. Do but ſhew a little diligence 'on your ſide, and you will engage him to mind 'nothing but your ſervice; if you are complaiſant, 'he will be a Flatterer; expreſs an affection for 'him, and he will be more ſenſible of it than you 'cou'd well believe, or he himſelf cou'd think to 'be. Then he quits all conſideration of Intereſt, 'and animating himſelf with all the zeal of Friend- 'ſhip, he will at laſt undertake your affairs with 'the ſame vigor as if they were his own. In- 'duſtrious, punctual, diligent in the proſecution 'of them; reckoning for nothing thoſe general 'offices by which ordinary Friendſhips are enter- 'tain'd, he will not be brought to believe, that

'you can be ſatisfied with him, much leſs will he be 'ſatisfied with himſelf, till he has moſt effectually 'ſerv'd you. The only danger you run, is, leſt you 'ſhould happen to offend the niceneſs of his Humour. A forgetfulneſs; an indifference ſhown 'without deſign, may occaſion his to you in good 'earneſt; a little raillery upon a Miſtreſs whom 'he loves, a diſcourſe of his miſconſtru'd, or ex-'pos'd, paſs with him for ſenſible Affronts; nay, 'without proportioning his reſentment to the of-'fence, he will take occaſion perhaps to revenge 'himſelf upon you in things of the greateſt impor-'tance to you. As no man living is more capable 'of ſetting off and extolling your good qualities, 'while he loves you, ſo no man better knows how 'to expoſe your infirmities and defects, in the moſt 'aggravating manner, than he does, when he 'thinks you give him a juſt provocation to break 'with you. This is what you have to apprehend 'from his Humour; but it will be no difficult mat-'ter to avoid it. To make ſure of him, you have 'nothing elſe to do, but to make ſure of your ſelf; 'and if you ſhew the leaſt regard to him, I dare 'engage that he will return it with far greater.'

As for Monſieur DE PALLUAU, replied the Duke of CANDALE, *I own to you, that I could like his Humour as ſoon as any man's in the world; and you will oblige me, ſince you have ſo particular a ſhare of his Friendſhip, if you will introduce me into his. I have as great an eſteem for Monſieur* DE MIOSSENS *as you can have. I know well enough, that no man can be maſter of better Qualities; no man has more wit, or exerts it more readily, or more effectually than he does to ſerve his Friends: but he has hitherto ſhown ſo diſobliging a Behaviour to me, that I am reſolv'd never to make any advances towards an acquaintance with him. If he had any inclination to court mine, or if you cou'd contrive a way to bring us together,*

together, and lay the foundation of a Friendſhip between us, I ſhould take no leſs delight to ſee it effected, than I ſhould find my advantage in it.

MORET, and the Chevalier DE LA VIEUVILLE, had, it ſeems, poſſeſs'd the Duke of CANDALE with an ill opinion of him, and he was inclinable enough of himſelf to receive it, out of a ſecret pique of Honour, which made him reſent the imperiouſneſs which Monſieur DE MIOSSENS aſſum'd with him on all occaſions, and which his unactive and lazy humour made him think not worth his while to oppoſe. I would not in this be underſtood, as if I call'd his Courage in queſtion: for he really did not want it, but the eaſineſs of his temper, and his indifference in all things, had an air of weakneſs in it, particularly on little occaſions, which he did not think important enough to diſturb his quiet. Every thing of Eclat, and which made a noiſe in the World, was an incentive to his Glory; and Glory made him diſcover the true uſe of his Spirit. I have even ſeen him go farther than he ought to have done for his own Honour, after he had ſlighted little matters, which however made a buſtle at the end. He was forward enough to hazard his fortune, nay, and his life too, when he thought his Reputation was thorowly engaged: but he gave the world too much advantage over him by ſupineneſs; and generally the world carried it too far, by maliciouſly ridiculing his conduct, which made him loſe the moderation of his humour, that was generally ſoft enough, but always leſs ſoft than ambitious.

This is a ſhort ſketch of the Duke of CANDALE's Character: but as he made noiſe enough in the world, to give people a curioſity to know him perfectly, it will not be amiſs to draw him in full length. I have known but few Men who had ſo many different Qualities: but he had this advan-

tage in the commerce of the World, that Nature expos'd only thoſe to publick view, that were agreeable, and took care to conceal whatever might create averſion. I never in all my life beheld ſo noble an Air as his: all his Perſon was agreeable, and nothing came amiſs to him, that lay within the reach of an ordinary Genius, both for a pleaſant Converſation, and Diverſions. A ſmall acquaintance made him be beloved: but it was impoſſible for one to have a long intimacy with him, without being diſguſted; ſo little care did he take to preſerve your friendſhip, and ſo fickle was he in his own. While he was thus indifferent, men of addreſs left him, without breaking off abruptly, and brought down their familiarity to a bare acquaintance: thoſe of more tender inclinations complain'd of him, as ſome do of an ungrateful Miſtreſs, whom they cannot however part with. Thus the Charms of his Perſon ſupported him in ſpite of all his defects, and oblig'd even thoſe who had been provok'd by him, to have a favourable opinion of him. As for him, he liv'd with his Friends, as the generality of Miſtreſſes do with their Lovers: whatever ſervices you had done him, he ceas'd to love you, when you ceas'd to pleaſe him; being, like them, diſguſted with a long acquaintance, and fond of the pleaſure which a new friendſhip gives, as the Ladies are of the tender delights of a new-born paſſion. However, he left his old engagements without an open rupture, and you wou'd have given him ſome uneaſineſs to have broken off entirely with him; the noiſe of ſuch a ſeparation having ſomething of violence in it, which was contrary to his nature. Beſides, he was not for excluding the return of an old Friend, who had been either agreeable or ſerviceable to him. As he was addicted to Pleaſure, and intereſted at the ſame time, he would come back to you upon the ſcore of your agreeableneſs,

and court you in his neceſſities. He was extremely covetous, and yet a ſpendthrift; fond of making a great figure, tho he did not like the charge of it. He was eaſy, and vain-glorious; ſelfiſh, but faithful and honeſt; qualities very oddly ſorted, but which, however, met together in the ſame perſon. There was ſcarce any thing troubled him more, than to be worſe than his word, and when Intereſt, the uſual director of all his actions, made him break it, he was ſo diſſatisfy'd with himſelf, that he was aſham'd to ſee you, till he thought you had forgotten the wrong he had done you. Then he would beſtir himſelf with new vigour for you, and thought himſelf ſecretly oblig'd to you for having reconcil'd him to himſelf. If his intereſt was not concern'd, he would ſeldom diſoblige you: but then you were to expect as few good offices from his friendſhip, as injuries from his hatred; and 'tis ſufficient matter of complaint, among friends, the not having any thing to commend a man for, but his doing us no hurt.

As for the fair Sex, he had for a long while an Indifference to them, or at leaſt took but little pains to gain their Affections. When once he appear'd ſo amiable to them, they ſoon diſcover'd that his indifference was a loſs rather to them, than to himſelf; and being acquainted with their own intereſt, they began to form deſigns upon a man who was too ſlow in executing any upon them. In ſhort, they lov'd him, and then, at laſt, he knew what it was to love. Towards the latter part of his Life, all our Ladies began to caſt their eyes on him: the moſt retir'd of the Sex ſigh'd in ſecret for him; the moſt gallant, diſputing the prize among themſelves, ſtrove to poſſeſs him, as their beſt fortune. After he had divided them in their intereſts of Gallantry, he reconcil'd them in their tears for his Death. All felt they lov'd him, and a common tenderneſs ſoon

became a general grief. Thoſe whom he had formerly lov'd, reviv'd the memory of their old Paſſion, and fondly imagin'd they had juſt now loſt what they had loſt long before. Several that were indifferent to him, flatter'd themſelves that they would not have been always ſo; and accuſing Death of preventing their happineſs, they mourn'd for ſo amiable a Perſon, of whom they might have been belov'd, had he liv'd. There are ſome that lamented him out of Vanity; and Ladies that never knew him, were ſeen to join their tears with the Parties concern'd, to give themſelves a merit of Gallantry. But his true Miſtreſs [11] made her ſelf famous by the exceſs of her Affliction; and had, in my opinion, been happy, if ſhe had kept it on to the laſt. One Amour is creditable to a Lady; and I know not whether it be not more advantageous to their Reputation, than never to have been in love.

A LETTER

TO

THE COUNT DE LIONNE.

I AM juſtly apprehenſive, leſt the continuance of our Correſpondence may become troubleſom to you, by reaſon of the continuance of my Diſgrace: which will oblige me for the future to retrench much of my own ſatisfaction, not to abuſe ſo warm a zeal as yours. Diſcretion is a virtue that ought to be practis'd with true Friends; and I am too much concern'd to preſerve you, not to uſe your

[11] *The Counteſs d'Olonne.*

your friendſhip with circumſpection. If I durſt, in this place, diſcover my ſoul to you, you wou'd ſee it deeply affected with the kindneſs of the moſt diſintereſted friend in the world; ſince nothing but your own generoſity maintains me in your affection: which makes me believe that you have a mind to ſet an example to Poſterity, which ſhe muſt deſpair ever to be able to imitate. In ſhort, I examine my ſelf every way, and find nothing in me but what juſtifies the diſguſt which others ought to entertain of my perſon. Reflections would be very irkſome to me, were they not alleviated by the remembrance of a perſon for whom I have the ſame veneration, which ſo accompliſh'd a merit gains him from every body.

But I will no longer make ſo nice a Modeſty as yours uneaſy: and therefore proceed to the Judgment you have aſk'd of me upon *Britannicus* [1]. I have read it with attention enough to obſerve fine things in it. It exceeds, in my opinion, both *Alexander* and *Andromache*: the Verſes of it are more magnificent; and I will not be ſurpriz'd if ſome Sublime be found in it. However, I deplore the misfortune of that Author, for having written ſo worthily upon a Subject which cannot afford an agreeable repreſentation. And, indeed, the Characters of NARCISSUS, AGRIPPINA, and NERO; and the black and horrible idea which is entertain'd of their Crimes, cannot be effaced from the memory of the Spectators; and whatever efforts he can make to ſhake off the thoughts of their Cruelties, the horror he has for them, does in ſome meaſure deſtroy the merit of the Play.

A

[1] *A Tragedy, by Racine.*

A

LETTER

FROM

M. CORNEILLE,

TO

M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

To return him Thanks for the Praiſes he had beſtow'd upon him, in the DISSERTATION *on* RACINE's Alexander.

SIR,

THE obligation I have to you, is of ſuch a nature as never to be worthily acknowledg'd by Thanks; and I am in ſuch confuſion about it, that I ſhould ſtill take up with ſilence, were I not apprehenſive it ſhould paſs with you for Ingratitude. Altho ſuch weighty Applauſe as yours ought to be extreme dear to us, there are yet conjunctures which infinitely raiſe the price of it. You honour me with your eſteem, at a time when there ſeems to be a Party form'd to rob me of all. You ſupport me, when they fancy they have thrown me down; and you give me a noble comfort for the niceneſs of our Age, when you vouchſafe to allow me the true taſte

taſte of Antiquity. This is a wonderful advantage for a man, who cannot doubt that Poſterity will depend upon your Judgment: and after this, I muſt freely own to you, that I think I have ſome right to treat as ridiculous, thoſe vain Trophies that are erected upon the imaginary ruins of mine; and to look down with pity on thoſe obſtinate prepoſſeſſions that were entertain'd for antient Heroes, new caſt after our faſhion.

Will you give me leave to add, in this place, that you have hit my weak ſide; and that my *Sophoniſba*, for whom you ſhow ſo much tenderneſs, has the beſt part of my own? How agreeably you flatter my Sentiments, when you confirm what I have advanc'd about the ſhare which Love ought to have in noble Tragedies, and with what fidelity we ought to preſerve to thoſe illuſtrious Antients, thoſe Characters of their Time, Nation, and Humour! I have hitherto been of opinion, that Love was a Paſſion attended with too much weakneſs to be predominant in an Heroick Piece: I would have it to be the Ornament, but not the Subſtance; and that great Souls ſhould not be acted by it, any farther than it is conſiſtent with nobler Impreſſions. Our Beaux and merry Sparks are of a contrary opinion; but ſince you declare for mine, 'tis a ſufficient reaſon for me to be extremely beholden to you, and ever to profeſs my ſelf,

SIR,

Your moſt humble and

moſt obedient Servant,

Corneille.

M.

M. DE ST. EVREMOND's

ANSWER

TO

M. CORNEILLE.

SIR,

I DON'T doubt but you would be the moſt thankful perſon in the world, if one ſhould do you any good Office, ſince you think your ſelf obliged for the Juſtice which has been done you. If you were to thank all thoſe who have the ſame opinion of your Works with my ſelf, you muſt return acknowledgments to all thoſe that underſtand them. I can aſſure you, that no man's Reputation was ever ſo well eſtabliſh'd as yours is in England and Holland. The Engliſh, who are naturally prone enough to value any thing of their own, renounce that opinion, tho often well grounded, and think they do ſufficient honour to their BEN JOHNSON [1], by calling him the *Engliſh Corneille.* Mr. WALLER, one of the greateſt Wits of the Age, does ſtill impatiently expect your new Plays, and

[1] *Ben Johnſon flouriſh'd in the Reigns of James* I. *and Charles* I. *He undertook to reform the Engliſh Stage, and did it with great ſucceſs. His Comedies are much beyond his Tragedies. He died in* 1637.

and fails not tranſlating one or two Acts of them into Engliſh Verſe, for his own ſatisfaction *. You are the only man of our Nation, whoſe thoughts have the advantage to hit his. He owns that they ſpeak and write well in France; but of all the French, he ſays, that you alone know how to think. Monſieur VOSSIUS, the greateſt Admirer of Greece, who cannot bear the leaſt compariſon between the Grecians and the Latins, does yet prefer you before SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES.

After the approbation of ſuch great Men, you ſurprize me, to tell me that your Reputation is attack'd in France. Does it then fare with Good Taſte, as with Faſhions, which begin to ſettle among Foreigners, when they are old at Paris? I ſhould not wonder to ſee them have ſome diſguſt for old Heroes, when we ſee a young one who eclipſes all their Glory: but if we are ſtill pleas'd to ſee them repreſented on our Theatres, how is it poſſible for them not to admire thoſe you deſcribe? I believe the influence of Ill Taſte is upon the decline; and that the firſt Piece you ſhall give the Publick, will ſhow, by the return of their former Applauſe, both the recovery of good ſenſe, and the reſtoration of reaſon. I cannot conclude, without returning you moſt humble thanks for the honour you have done me. I ſhould think my ſelf unworthy of the praiſes you beſtow on my Judgment; but as it is generally employ'd in finding out the Beauties of your Works, I confound our Intereſts, and with pleaſure gratify a vanity mixt with the juſtice I do you.

* *Mr. Waller hath tranſlated into Engliſh Corneille's* Pompey, *aſſiſted by the Earl of Dorſet and Middleſex.*

A LETTER TO THE COUNT DE LIONNE.

YOUR impatience for my return, increaſes mine, that I may have the pleaſure to ſee you again: but you cannot entirely remove my apprehenſions, that too earneſt ſollicitations with Monſieur DE LIONNE, the Miniſter, may render you leſs agreeable, and my Affair importuning. I ought to be ſo equitable, as to manage his good-will, and believe that the weighty Affairs that lie upon his hands, are ſomewhat more preſſing than my own. Your activity for your Friends, gives me this ſuſpicion; which, however, is not of long duration; for your addreſs heartens me again, and perſuades me, that you will always nick the time. I ſhould have been very ſorry that the Compariſon of the Prince, the ſide-wind Letter, and the Character of * * * ſhould have been at the diſpoſal of M. BARBIN[1]. As for all the reſt, your theft has made it yours, provided my Name do not appear in it; and I have no manner of ſhare in it: ſo that the thing it ſelf, and the management of it, depend upon you alone. You are too reaſonable to be ſo concern'd as you ſeem to be, at what I have writ to you about the Printers in Holland. I had no other deſign in it, than to let you ſee how much I value the delicacy of

[1] *A famous Bookſeller in Paris, who had ſurreptitiouſly printed ſome Pieces of M. de St. Evremond.*

of ſo polite a ſtyle as yours: for, in truth, no man can write better than you do.

The new Writing of LISOLA[2] was printed at Bruſſels, and only ſeven or eight Copies of it were brought to this place. One of my Friends read it to me, but would not let me have it. It is a continuation of Remarks on the Letter of Monſieur DE LIONNE, the Miniſter; wherein he endeavours to prove, that all the advances made at Paris towards Peace, are only amuſements, to hinder England and Holland from oppoſing the Conqueſt of the Netherlands; and maintains, that the deſign of attacking Franche-Comtê, and that of making Peace, were inconſiſtent; drawing conſequences from every thing. There are ſome things very witty in his Remarks; but then there are too many jeſts, for ſo important a matter. The Spaniards cannot avoid accepting the alternative, England and Holland being the Umpires of the Peace; but the Marquis DE CASTEL RODRIGO[3] wiſhes for nothing more than the continuation of the War, which will bring the Engliſh and Dutch into his party. They very much wiſh for Peace here, but neglect nothing that regards the War.

I am very much oblig'd to Monſieur CORNEILLE for the honour he does me. His Letter is admirable, and I know not whether he writes better in Verſe than in Proſe. I deſire you to deliver my Anſwer to him, and to aſſure him, that no man in the world has ſo great an eſteem for any thing that

[2] *Francis, Baron de Liſola, born at Bezançon, betook himſelf to the Emperor's ſervice, who employ'd him in ſeveral Embaſſies, wherein he made himſelf very advantageouſly known. During the War in Flanders, the Gariſon of Liſle having intercepted a Letter, which M. de Lionne wrote to the King, M. de Liſola publiſh'd ſome Remarks upon it. He wrote alſo ſome other Pieces againſt France. See M. Bayle's* Dictionary, *in the Article of* Liſola.

[3] *Governor of the Netherlands.*

that comes from him, as my ſelf. I have read neither *Amphitryon*[3] nor *Laodice*[4], but as I caſt my eyes by chance upon the latter, the Verſes have kept up my attention longer than I thought: I deſire you to return the Author thanks, in my name, for ſending me his Piece, which I ſhall read very carefully, and without doubt with great pleaſure. You ſhall have no Compliments for your ſelf; for a well-eſtabliſh'd friendſhip rejects whatever looks like ceremony.

P. S. Since this Letter was written, I read an Act of *Laodice*, which ſeems to me very fine.

MOLIERE ſurpaſſes PLAUTUS in his *Amphitryon*, as well as TERENCE in his other Plays.

TO THE SAME.

NOthing is ſo agreeable to Friendſhip, as well as Love, as the demonſtration of a true Affection, which cannot be better expreſs'd, than by bearing a part in the misfortunes of thoſe we love. Your concern for the miſcarriage of my Affair, takes off one half of my own, and puts me in a condition to bear the other patiently. I knew nothing of what you write to me, none of my Friends having been forward, no more than your ſelf, in ſending me a melancholy piece of news: but this diſcretion, as obliging as it is, gives me to underſtand, that they have but an ill opinion of my Conſtancy. Seven full years of Misfortunes ought at leaſt to have inur'd me to Sufferings, if they have not been able to form in me a Virtue ſuperior to them. To end a moral Diſcourſe, impertinent in him that makes it, and too ſevere for him we entertain, I'll tell you, in few words, that I ſhould have

[3] *A Comedy by Moliere.*
[4] *A Tragedy by Thomas Corneille.*

have been glad to ſee again the pleaſanteſt Country I know of, and ſome Friends, as dear to me for the demonſtrations of their Friendſhip, as in conſideration of their merit. However, a man muſt not be driven to deſpair, becauſe he lives in a Nation where delights are ſcarce. I content my ſelf with Indolence, where I cannot enjoy Pleaſures. I had ſtill five or ſix years to reliſh Plays, Muſick, and Good-cheer, and I muſt take up with Policy, Order, and Oeconomy; and form to my ſelf a languiſhing amuſement from the contemplation of the grave Dutch Virtues. You will oblige me to return a thouſand moſt humble thanks to Monſieur DE LIONNE, the Miniſter, for his kindneſs to me. I am ſo unprofitable a Servant, that I dare not even mention Gratitude; but I am not the leſs ſenſible of the Obligation. You will oblige me likewiſe, to acquaint me with the ſtate of my Affairs, and what anſwer has been return'd. Your Letter will certainly be receiv'd in the packet of Monſieur D'ESTRADES when he is here. As for the Airs and Novelties, I will not put him to ſo much charge for Poſtage: but pray ſend me nothing but what you like very well, either in Muſick, or of any other kind. As for thoſe Triffles with which I amus'd my ſelf now and then, I have nothing but about one half of a diſcourſe, which is not yet copied fair. About a year ago, the fancy took me to treat of *Intereſt in Perſons altogether corrupted*; *the too rigid Virtue*; *and the ſenſe of a Man of Honour, who keeps a Medium, and draws from both what ought to enter the Commerce of the world.* I had left thoſe Papers in England, and found them loſt, except ſome Periods of the laſt writing. I ſhall endeavour to make them up again; but as they have too great a connexion with thoſe that are loſt, I believe the whole will be but indifferent.

INTEREST

IN

Perſons altogether Corrupted.

The Corrupted ſpeaks.

I Have paſs'd, Gentlemen, thro' all conditions, and after an exact reflection upon Life, I find but two things that can deſerve the thoughts and application of a wiſe man; the care of getting, and that of hoarding.

Honour is nothing but the infatuation of young men: 'tis by that a man begins his Reputation, when he is a fool; and he concludes it by that which is call'd *Corruption*, ſo ſoon as he becomes wiſe.

As for me, I never had my mind poſſeſs'd with Chimeras. *Duty*, *Friendſhip*, *Gratitude*, *Obligation*, and the reſt of thoſe errors that entangle Coxcombs and Fools in their ſnares, have not given me a momen'ts trouble in all my life. Nature ſent me into the world with the true principles of Intereſt, which I have improv'd by Study, and fortified by Experience. Greedineſs, which cauſes the ſame thirſt after Wealth, as Ambition doth after Power, has rais'd me to great advantages, without making me careleſs of the ſmalleſt profits.

There are a hundred different ways of getting, which are but ſo many different rewards of our induſtry.

induſtry. It would be a difficult thing to aſſign all the particular ways of getting; but a man can never be deceiv'd, if he makes it his principal maxim, to *prefer the Profitable before the Honeſt*. To apply one's ſelf to the profitable is to follow the intention of Nature; which, by a ſecret inſtinct, leads us to what is agreeable to us, and obliges us to make all things center in our ſelves. *Honour* is an imaginary duty, which merely for the conſideration of others, makes us abſtain from the goods we might enjoy, or part with thoſe which we ſhould retain.

As for what relates to hoarding; is it not reaſonable we ſhould manage with care, what we have acquir'd with difficulty? So long as we have money in our coffers, we ſhall have friends and truſty ſervants[1]: if we exhauſt it by a vain Liberality, we ſhall only give the world liberty to be ungrateful, when we have loſt that which ſecur'd to us the ſervices and reſpect of others. There are but a few grateful perſons, and tho we ſhould meet with ſuch, it is certain, that the price of Gratitude very rarely comes up to that of the Benefit.

There is one thing of great uſe, which I have happily practis'd; and that is, Gentlemen, to promiſe eternally, and very rarely to perform. A man gets more ſervices by Promiſes, than by Preſents; for Men generally endeavour to deſerve, what they hope from us: but are beholden to themſelves only for what they receive; and either look upon it to be a recompence of their Pains, or an effect of their Induſtry. However, of all the ſeveral ſorts of the Ungrateful, theſe ſeem to me to be the leaſt dangerous, becauſe they undeceive us immediately, and never put us to the expence of a ſecond gift.

[1] *This is one of Machiavel's thoughts.*

You will meet with others much more to be fear'd, who perpetually extol the Good which is done them, ſo as to trouble the whole world with their acknowledgments: they have always the name of their Benefactor in their mouths, and his picture in their chambers; but what do they propoſe to themſelves from this vain ſhew of Gratitude? They imagine it gives them a title to a new pretenſion; and whilſt you think they are employ'd about acknowledging the favour which they ſo lately receiv'd, they think they have already done enough to deſerve another, and will not be wanting to ask for it. A fine ſubtlety indeed, of this age, to turn Gratitude towards what is to come; which, till now, was nothing but the ſenſe of a paſt Obligation!

As you are to live with Perſons that have their deſigns upon you, 'tis your buſineſs to uſe all caution againſt them: but without putting your judgment to the expence of examining their good and evil Intentions, the beſt way will be, to ſecure your ſelf by a general diſtruſt of all Mankind. However, not to create an univerſal diſguſt, which would make all the world abandon you, it will be proper to appear diſintereſted ſometimes, out of a ſecret deſign of Intereſt; it will be convenient, now and then, to do ſome publick actions of ſeeming Generoſity, tho indeed 'tis but all artifice; and to force your Nature to do a favour, as nobly as if it came from a true Inclination. By this means, you will efface the remembrance of what is paſt, and make the world expect great matters from you for the future.

But on theſe rare occaſions, the ſecret is, to chuſe a Man of an eſtabliſh'd merit, or one who for his agreeable qualities is generally belov'd: by this univerſal eſteem, or friendſhip, every one fooliſhly thinks himſelf oblig'd by a favour, which

is

is receiv'd but by one ſingle perſon. After the noiſe of ſo noble an Action, let the world continue in the good opinion of your Generoſity, and take pleaſure ſometimes in enjoying the flattery of ſupple Slaves, and the approbation of ill Judges.

As by this conduct you have rais'd Deſires, and permitted Hopes to be entertain'd, all thoſe who think themſelves deſerving will ſtrive to ſhew it in your preſence. Your Enemies will endeavour to find out ſecret ways to reconcile themſelves, that they may not be excluded from your Favours. Your Friends, animated by a new zeal, will do their utmoſt to deſerve them; and thoſe Perſons, who are particularly devoted to you, will redouble their care and diligence in ſerving you.

Then, when you ſee all the world concur in your praiſe, you may inſenſibly betake your ſelf again to your uſual method. Your Acquaintance will become more difficult: to have a bare ſight of you will be no ſmall condeſcenſion; to ſpeak with you will be a greater: your Frowns will drive away the troubleſom, and your Smiles will ſatisfy the fooliſh: your familiarity, as unprofitable as it may be, will be taken for a mighty favour; and to conclude all, in a word, you will practiſe all your vain things with others, and prudently reſerve all the ſolid ones for your ſelf.

THE TOO RIGID VIRTUE.

The Virtuous Perſon ſpeaks.

I Have paſs'd, as well as you, thro' all Conditions, and after an exact reflection upon Life, I find but two things that can render it happy: to moderate our Deſires, and to make a good uſe of our Fortune.

They, to whom Reaſon affords a repoſe which opinion takes away from us, live free from many misfortunes, and are in a condition of enjoying the moſt real Bleſſings. A Man, advanc'd to Greatneſs, who makes others find their Fortune in his, joins a great Merit to a great Happineſs; he is not the more happy by the wealth he enjoys, than by that which he knows how to give: but he who, like you, courts all mankind for his Intereſt, and will not ſuffer any to ſhare advantages with him, makes himſelf unworthy of common Society, and deſerves to be excluded from all Converſation.

Notwithſtanding the ill opinion I have entertain'd of you, I cannot but think, that there is a Vanity in the confeſſion of your Vices. Nature has not left it in your power to be ſo wicked as you would appear to be. A Man is not abſolutely ungrateful, with impunity; he doth not betray, without remorſe;

remorſe; nor is he ſo greedy of another's wealth, and ſo tenacious of his own, without ſome ſhame. And tho you had compounded with your ſelf, free from inward ſtruggles, and ſecret agitations, you are ſtill to account with the world, whoſe importunate reproaches, and troubleſom accuſations, you muſt be forc'd to endure.

As for the mercenaay principle of Intereſt, you were talking of, 'tis that which renders you contemptible: for ſtory tells us of illuſtrious Villains, but there never was an illuſtrious Miſer in nature. Greatneſs of Soul cannot conſiſt with the ſordid baſeneſs of Avarice. Beſides, what can be more unjuſt, than to engroſs that which is the Soul of Commerce and of publick Conveniency, to make no uſe at all of it? 'Tis no better than foſtering of crimes, and to rob the Publick by a continu'd theft, of what was once extorted from private Perſons.

Thoſe that take away with Violence, in order to ſcatter with Profuſion, are far more excuſable. Their expence is, as it were, a kind of reſtitution; and the Loſers ſeem to recover ſome part of their Poſſeſſions, when magnificence expoſes to their eyes, what force had wreſted out of their hands. If an ill reputation is indifferent to you, if injuſtice hath no influence upon you, yet have, at leaſt, ſome regard to your own repoſe.

Since all your deſires center in Money, whether it be in your own cuſtody, or another's, it equally diſquiets you; you are mad to be diſappointed of getting it; what you poſſeſs, keeps you in perpetual pain; and if you loſe it, you are upon the rack of deſpair: now, as nothing is ſo agreeable, as to have Riches, and to make a right uſe of them; ſo there is nothing ſo uneaſy, as to be greedy, and too frugal, at the ſame time.

I confeſs, your diſcourſe upon Ungrateful Perſons, is no leſs ingenious than true; but in anſwer to that, it may be replied, that this nicety of yours proceeds more from your obſervation than your experience. Your mighty precaution againſt Ingratitude, ſhews leſs hatred for it, than averſion for Generoſity; and really you don't leſs avoid the thankful than the ungrateful. Both one and the other receive favours, and your intention is to beſtow none; tho, perhaps, you may forgive an injury that is done you, yet you are irreconcilable when you have done a kindneſs, if it doth not hook in a greater.

Since I am inſenſibly engag'd in this matter of Benefits, I will carry it on a little farther. There are ſome men of the humour of Cardinal XIMENEZ, who never agree to what is requeſted of them, becauſe they would not be prevented, they ſay, in their deſigns, nor diſturb'd in the order of the good they intend to do. There are men ſo jealous of the honour of their own actions, that they reject every thing which is ſuggeſted them by others. This may come ſometimes from a good principle, and be found in lofty Souls; but, for the moſt part, they are diſhonourable Jealouſies, and falſe niceties of Honour, which proceed from a real unwillingneſs to do kindneſſes.

Let us ſuffer the Miſerable to explain their neceſſities to us, ſince we do not ſo much as think of them in our plenty. Let us not be aſham'd of owing the thoughts of a good action to another; and let us leave all the avenues free to thoſe that adviſe us to do well. In the mean time, we ſhould think our ſelves too eaſy, did we not ſhew our ſelves difficult to be perſuaded to what is good, while we receive what is ill with the moſt implicit credulity, and believe we are maſters of our ſelves. Every one fears the aſcendant of his Friends, if they intend to procure a good office from him; every

every one takes a malicious ſecret, and the artifice of thoſe ill Impreſſions that are given him, to come from a ſincerity of Heart, and a real Friendſhip. And yet 'tis in this latter caſe, our caution is warrantable; 'tis here we may be upon our guard with jealouſy; 'tis here we ought to defend our ſelves from nice inſinuations, which inſenſibly lead us to do ill.

But to leave diſcourſes that are too general; what are you the better for making all acceſs to you ſo difficult? What ſignifies that great art, which rules every line of your face; which governs your *Smiles* and *Frowns*? To give ſeaſonably, and to refuſe with reaſon, would be more beneficial for others, and more advantageous for your ſelf. There is no great merit in being able to overreach thoſe who have their dependence upon you. You think you ſhew the ſubtlety of your Wit, while you only diſcover the malice of your Nature.

The great pains you take to delude the expectations of others, will delude the Deſigner, and come home to your ſelf at laſt. Every day brings you Riches, and every day retrenches the uſe of them; your Wealth increaſes, and your Senſes, which ſhould enjoy it, decay. You acquire things that are wholly foreign to you, and in the mean time loſe your ſelf.

What are you the better then for all theſe fine advantages of nature? What benefit do you reap by this noble genius of Intereſt? You paſs your Life amongſt ſuperfluous Treaſures, while Covetouſneſs doth not allow you the diſpoſal, and Nature deprives you of the enjoyment of them. How unhappy is your fortune, both in relation to your ſelf and others, which perſecutes you with inquietudes within, and envy without!

THE

THE SENSE

Of an honeſt experienc'd Courtier, upon Rigid Virtue, and Baſe Intereſt.

I AM concern'd, Sir, that a Virtue too rigid ſhould animate you ſo ſtrongly againſt Vice. Have more indulgence, I beſeech you, for the vicious, or at leaſt ſhew a little more gentleneſs in the manner of your Correction.

I know that Reaſon was given us to regulate our Morals: but Reaſon, heretofore ſavage and auſtere, was civiliz'd with time, and, at preſent, preſerves very little of its primitive rigour. It wanted auſterity, at firſt, to eſtabliſh Laws, in order to prevent outrage and violence: it was afterwards ſoften'd, to introduce Civility into human Society: it became nice and curious in the ſearch of Pleaſures, to render life as agreeable, as before it was endeavour'd to be made ſecure and civil. Thus, Sir, we ought to forget that time, when it was enough to be ſevere to be thought virtuous, ſince Politeneſs, Gallantry, and knowledge of Pleaſures, make up a great part of our merit at preſent.

As for the hatred of villainous Actions, it ought to continue ſo long as the world does: but give leave to Gentlemen of refin'd palates, to call that Pleaſure, which Clowns and ill-bred People call Vice; and don't make up your Virtue of old muſty Notions,

tions, which the primitive Mortals deriv'd from their natural ſavageneſs.

In my opinion, you begin but ill with the Courtiers, to preach up inceſſantly to them the moderation of their Deſires, ſince they particularly value themſelves upon their Ambition. You might, perhaps, poſſeſs them with a diſguſt of the World: but while they live at Court, to pretend they ſhould regulate their pretenſions, is unpracticable Doctrine. Indeed, when a man has left the Court, he may make a ſhift to fling up every thing; but 'tis difficult, while he reſides upon the ſpot, not to deſire much; and, ungentleman-like, to confine himſelf eaſily to a ſmall matter.

Among ſo many different Intereſts, where your own is concern'd, Ambition and Virtue are not eaſily reconcil'd. We ought to commend the dexterity of thoſe who know to adjuſt them together; we ought to ſatisfy our ſelves ſometimes with a Good which is not entirely ſo, and ſometimes ſubmit contentedly to a ſmall Ill; we ſhould not exact a ſcrupulous Probity, nor cry out that all is loſt, when the Corruption is but light.

" The Gods, ſays a certain perſon, never gave " a greater Preſent to mankind, than the Soul of " the latter CATO; but, they miſtook their " time when they gave it:" his Virtue, which would have been juſtly admir'd in the beginning of the Republick, proved fatal to it towards its end, by being too pure and upright. This juſt CATO, who might have ſav'd his Country, if he could have contented himſelf with making his Citizens leſs vicious, deſtroy'd both that and himſelf, by endeavouring, to no purpoſe, to make them virtuous. A man of a leſs perfect Probity, who could have borne with the Vices of ſome particular perſons, had hinder'd a general oppreſſion. It was neceſſary to connive at the Irregularities of ſome Men in power,

to

to prevent tyranny; for, by that means, the Republick might have been preſerved: 'twould have been a corrupt one, I confeſs; but ſtill it had been a Republick.

Therefore, Sir, let us not ſo fix our eyes on the World, as it ought to be, as not to be able to ſuffer it as it is: however, let not this indulgence be ſhewn to our ſelves. Let us ſhew forbearance and temper to others, but be ſevere to our ſelves: enemies to Vice in our own Conſciences, let us not expreſs any horror for the Vicious, leſt we make the whole world our enemy.

For what can you propoſe to your ſelf, by railing at covetous and ungrateful Men, as ſo many Monſters that affright you? I know that Ingratitude and Avarice are abominable qualities; but ſince they are ſo common in the world, either you muſt reſolve to bear with them, or retire into a Deſart, and carry that Virtue along with you into your retirement, which will make you be hated at Court.

If you would reform the ungrateful, perſuade Great Men to make a better choice of the Perſons whom they intend to oblige. When we find them more nice and careful in the diſtribution of their favours, thoſe that are oblig'd by them, will make it their particular ſtudy to be grateful to their Benefactors. If you would change the humour of a fordid Miſer, don't think to effect it by fine ſpeeches: all the Morality in the world may be preach'd to him without effect; repreſent to him the conſiderable fortunes which ſome have rais'd by being at a ſmall expence; poſſeſs him with the contempt which a penurious way of living draws upon a man; ſhew him what advantages perſons of the ſame rank with himſelf have above him, merely by uſing a prudent Liberality; and to cure him of this baſe Intereſt,

don't

don't be wanting to ſet before his eyes another that is honourable.

Repreſent to your Man of Artifice and Self-ends, that all his machines will turn againſt himſelf. He would have his Servants faithful to him, yet the example of his own treachery will corrupt them. As he values himſelf upon his ingenious addreſs, in promiſing much, and performing nothing; ſo others will claim a more ingenious right to cheat him, and every one will reward himſelf at his expence. He entertains his Friends in a ſcandalous unprofitable familiarity, whereby he gives them an opportunity to ſpy out his Faults, and to pry into his Affairs, without engaging them, by any tie, to reſervedneſs and ſecrecy.

As for thoſe premeditated good Offices, that proceed purely from Deſign and Artifice, as they are only a ſlight intermiſſion of a knaviſh conduct, ſo they produce no more than a light ſuſpenſion in our Affections; and ſo ſoon as the deſigning Miſer returns to his former practice, the world is immediately even with him, and turns to its former averſion.

By the like Reaſons you may make him ſenſible of the advantages he may draw from Virtue, and the prejudice which a ſordid purſuit of one's Intereſt carries with it. This is the niceneſs I expect in the manner of your Reproofs: for I cannot endure that you ſhould ſet up for a Philoſopher, or a profeſs'd Caſuiſt, and declaim with a ſplenetick and ſupercilious vehemence againſt Vice. In ſhort, Sir, what can you hope from this fine Harangue? *Every day brings you Riches, and every day retrenches the uſe of them. Your Wealth increaſes, and your Senſes, that ought to enjoy it, decay; you gain external things, and loſe your ſelf.* Theſe People now take the thing quite otherwiſe; the Money which comes to their Coffers, makes them amends for the

day that is ſpent in getting it. The weakneſs of their Senſes is repair'd, as they imagine, by the increaſe of their Riches; and when they decay in vigour, they think that in ſome manner they make up the loſs, by the improvement of their wealth. Your Wiſdom, Sir, is too refin'd for Men that are ſo corrupted; there is too great a diſtance between you and them, to be able to meet together. Let us be content to be virtuous, in regard of our ſelves, and not affect a Probity which will render us troubleſom to others: let us court the acquaintance of Men of Integrity, without having any averſion for thoſe that are not ſo: let us bear with all ſorts of Perſons, but converſe moſt with thoſe who can beſt pleaſe us.

As there are few Men of ſo conſummate a Virtue, that they can wholly ſatisfy you; ſo, on the other hand, there are few ſo extremely vicious, that you muſt be forc'd to break off with them. Beſides, as we may find defects in the moſt virtuous Man, when we ſtudy him diligently, we may likewiſe diſcover ſome good Qualities in the Man who is leaſt ſo, if we will be at the pains to examine him. We very rarely find either all Virtue, or all Vice in any Man: the good and the bad qualities are blended together, and a nice diſcernment may eaſily diſtinguiſh them.

A covetous Man has his friends, and is not wanting to ſerve them, altho he loves his Money much better than them. If he be a man of intereſt, he will uſe it in their behalf, and be glad to employ his diligence, to be excus'd from more ſubſtantial offices of friendſhip.

Another Man will deſerve your intimacy by his diſintereſted Friendſhip, and agreeable Converſation, tho his lazineſs, and want of application, may render him unſerviceable to you, when he ought to act vigorouſly in your behalf. I know

ſome

ſome Perſons of this temper, who are at death's door if they are to ſtir never ſo little for you, and whoſe natural ſupineneſs will not let them move one ſtep for you: but at the ſame time you may command their purſes and fortunes, if you'll excuſe their application and induſtry.

As ſome Perſons are too frugal in their nature, but at the ſame time very agreeable; to take from them all ſuſpicion of expence, frequent their Houſes but ſeldom, and enjoy with pleaſure their company in your own.

Another Man is very ready to ſerve you, that would not acknowledge any obligation you ſhould lay upon him; and being himſelf not very punctual in point of gratitude, will leave the acknowledgment of the favour he does you to your own diſcretion.

There are ſome light-headed, extravagant perſons in the world, whoſe ordinary Acquaintance you ought to avoid; but whoſe Raſhneſs may be more ſerviceable to you, upon ſome occaſion or other, than the Prudence of the Wiſe. Prudent Men will not act ſo vigorouſly in your intereſt, but their Judgments will help to regulate your Conduct. Beſides, we are not always the ſame. We do too much honour to human Nature, when we aſſign uniformity to it. He that neglects you to-day with coldneſs, will, by ſome extraordinary turn of mind, ſeek out an opportunity to ſerve you to-morrow. In ſhort, men are changeable, various, made up of good and ill qualities. Let us make all the honeſt uſe of them that we can, and not avoid Men for their defects, who might with as much reaſon, ſhun us for ours.

It is time to ſum up, in a few words, all that may be ſaid upon opinions ſo oppoſite: they have this common in their oppoſition, that they keep us too devoted to our ſelves, tho in a different manner.

The one, thro' fondneſs of a Virtue, which is only beneficial to our ſelves, would carry us into a Deſart, and deter us from the common offices of a civil life; the other brings us into Society, that we may make our own private advantage of the publick. If we follow the firſt, every thing will be Vice with us, becauſe we frame to our ſelves an idea of Virtue that the World never practis'd. If we will be govern'd by the latter, there will be no more Faith, nor Honour, nor Integrity left amongſt us. We muſt live amongſt Men, as if we were not of the ſame Species; indifferent to their Merit, exempt from their Paſſions, inſenſible of their Pleaſures, and ſtudious of nothing but our own Intereſt.

On one ſide, the Speculations are too pure and refin'd; on the other, too baſe and corrupted: but we can better make ſhift without a good, which produces not an unprofitable virtue, than ſuffer the effects of ſo dangerous a Corruption.

A LETTER

TO THE

COUNT DE LIONNE.

SIR,

PERHAPS you are not at Paris: perhaps you are; and in this laſt caſe, your ſilence may be rather the effect of your forgetfulneſs, than of your abſence. But, ſuppoſe it were, I am too much beholden to you for your paſt ſervices, to com-

complain of your preſent indifference. I don't inquire after you, to fatigue you for an Anſwer, or renew a Correſpondence that would rob you of ſome hours, which you know how to beſtow to better purpoſe. But, Sir, you ſtill owe ſomething to our Friendſhip, and you will diſcharge the obligation, if you can find ſome way, either by your ſelf, or any body elſe, to let me know that you are in health. This piece of news will give me a joy, in which you are more concern'd than any other; and if you were of my temper, you would be of my opinion, that to be well is better than to command the whole world. No Treaſures are worth one year's Health.

Pardon, Sir, the chat of an infirm man, who enjoying a quarter of an hour's health, thinks no other ſubject ſo proper to be talk'd on. You were, perhaps, of my humour, when you enjoy'd ſome eaſe of the pains occaſion'd by your broken arm, and your other wounds. Now you are perfectly cur'd, reliſh the pleaſure of it, and let me make melancholy reflections on the Song you have taught me:

But oh! when Age benums our veins,
No longer ſprightly Joy remains!

If there be any Airs as agreeable as this in the Muſick of the *Feaſt of Verſailles*, I deſire you to ſend them me prick'd, and you will oblige one who is more than ever, *&c.*

TO THE SAME.

I Receiv'd, juſt now, the Letter you have done me the honour to write me, with the Airs you have ſent me. I ſhould have a thouſand thanks

to return you; but knowing, as I do, your inclination to oblige me, you will, I hope, allow me to be ſomewhat ſlow in making acknowledgments; for the continual repetition of favours might fatigue ſo tender a gratitude as mine. Be perſuaded, however, that I have a due ſenſe of your kindneſs; and that you may more abſolutely diſpoſe of me, than of any man you know.

I never was more ſurpriz'd in my life, than to ſee expos'd to ſale here, three little Books that are father'd upon me, and are now printing at Amſterdam. It is about twenty years ſince I made ſome ſhort Diſcourſes on the Reflections that are contain'd in one of thoſe little Books[1]; but know not who got them from me.

Continue, I beſeech you, to love me always: and be perſuaded, that you'll never have a ſurer friend, or one more paſſionate to ſerve you.

When there is ſomething curious and diverting, I intreat you to ſend it me: particularly Monſieur ARNAUD's *Anſwer* to Monſieur CLAUDE[2], as ſoon as 'tis printed; with Mr. CLAUDE's *Reply*, which undoubtedly will ſoon follow: *habitâ ratione* of Poſtage, that is, any other way than by the Poſt.

Do not forbear obliging me: for let my gratitude be never ſo tender, yet it will laſt as long as my ſelf; nor ſhall I ever forget what you do for my Intereſt.

TO

[1] *See Vol.* I. *pag.* 26. *and* 31.

[2] *A Book intitled,* La Perpetuité de la Foy de l'Egliſe Catholique touchant l'Euchariſtie, defenduë contre le Livre du Sieur Claude Miniſtre de Charenton. *M. Claude ſoon anſwer'd that Book, and the Janſeniſts never made but a general Reply to that Work. See M. Bayle's* Dictionary, *in the Articles of Meſſieurs* Arnaud *and* Claude.

TO THE SAME.

IF I conſulted nothing but diſcretion, I might ſave you the trouble of receiving ſome of my Letters, and the fatigue of an Anſwer, which your civility will incline you to write; but as 'tis my temper to conſult my own ſatisfaction as much as yours, you will not take it ill if I enjoy that which I find in entertaining you; and all that I can do for you, Sir, is not to abuſe it, by too frequent an enjoyment. If you knew what a great trouble it is to me to forbear it, you would eaſily forgive what I do, for the violence I undergo in not doing more.

I am return'd to a Court [1], after having liv'd four years in a Republick, without either Pleaſure or Entertainment; for I think the Hague is the true ſeat of Indolence. I know not how I put new life into my ſentiments: but, however, the fancy took me to feel ſomething more quick and lively; and a fond imagination that I might return to France, made me pitch upon London, as a medium between the French Courtiers, and the Dutch Burgomaſters. Hitherto, I was contented to take up with the Heavineſs, or to ſpeak more obligingly, the Gravity of the Gentlemen of Holland: but as I do not find my ſelf much nearer France than I was, ſo the vivacity I have ſtudied, is very injurious to my repoſe; ſince it draws me back from Indolence, without advancing me to Pleaſure. That I mean, which I fancied to my ſelf in ſeeing you at Paris: for, to ſpeak the truth, I find here a great deal, amongſt abundance of polite and well-bred men.

[1] *M. De St. Evremond wrote this Letter, immediately upon his return to England, in the year* 1670.

Your Friend the Duke of BUCKINGHAM has told me, that I was very much beholden to M. DE LIONNE the Miniſter: to whom I intreat you to return a thouſand thanks from me. I am one of his Admirers; but my admiration is not worth the pains he has taken: and indeed, 'twas only his generoſity that prompted him to act ſo nobly. Pray, be your ſelf ſo generous, as now and then to remember your moſt humble and moſt obedient Servant.

TO THE SAME.

ALTHO I ſhould not regret Monſieur DE LIONNE the Miniſter out of my own Intereſt; yet out of mere regard to you, I would have receiv'd the news of his Death with great Sorrow[a]. I am inform'd he is generally lamented at Paris; and I can aſſure you, that the Foreigners honour his memory with the ſame ſentiments that the French entertain of him. Whatever was the merit of the great Miniſters of our State, foreign Nations did ever rejoice at their Death; and 'twas a long time before they could paſs from the hatred of their Perſons, to the veneration of their Virtues. Monſieur DE LIONNE is the only man whoſe Death was apprehended, and who has made the world ſenſible of their Loſs, at the ſame inſtant he died. To enlarge on the Death of Great Men, is to add grief and affliction to Death herſelf: ſhe has no need of ſuch helps to be ghaſtly; which makes me break off that Diſcourſe, to aſſure, that no man can be more truly than I am, *&c.*

TO

[a] *Hugues de Lionne, Marquis de Freſne and de Berny, Miniſter and Secretary of State, dyed in the year* 1671.

TO THE
MARESCHAL DE CREQUI,

Who ask'd the temper of my Mind, and my thoughts of all things, in my old Age.

WHEN we are young, the popular Opinion ſways us, and we are more ſolicitous to gain the eſteem of others than of our ſelves. But when arriv'd to old Age, we are apt to have a leſs value for foreign things; and are moſt taken up with our ſelves, when we are ready to be wanting to our ſelves. It is with Life as with our other Poſſeſſions: all is waſted when we think our ſtock greateſt; and we are ſeldom frugal, but when there remains little to be managed. Hence we ſee young men ſquander (as it were) their being, in which they think they have a long term of years to come: but we become more dear to our ſelves, as we are neareſt loſing our ſelves. Heretofore my roving, wandring fancy, rambled after all manner of foreign objects: at preſent my mind contracts it ſelf to the body, and unites more ſtraitly with it: not, indeed, out of any ſenſe of pleaſure from ſuch an alliance, but out of neceſſity of the mutual ſuccour and aſſiſtance, which they endeavour to afford one another.

In this languiſhing condition, I yet retain ſome Pleaſures; but I have loſt all ſenſe of Vice, without knowing whether this change be owing to the in-

firmity of a decay'd Body, or the moderation of a Mind better improv'd in Wiſdom than heretofore. I fear my Age has a greater ſhare in it than my Virtue; and that I have more reaſon to complain, than brag of the obedience of my Inclinations. And, indeed, it were prepoſterous for me to aſcribe to my Reaſon the power of ſubjecting my Deſires, if they are too weak to revolt: ſo that what Wiſdom ſoever men at my years may boaſt of, it is hard to diſtinguiſh whether thoſe Paſſions, we now no longer feel, be ſubdued or extinguiſh'd.

Whatever it be, when our ſenſes are no longer affected by external objects, nor our ſouls mov'd by their impreſſions, it is properly no more than a ſtate of Indolence: yet is not this Indolence without its Charms. For to think himſelf exempt from all uneaſineſs, is enough to give joy to a reaſonable man. The enjoyment of Pleaſures is not always required: the privation of Pain well managed, renders our condition ſufficiently happy.

When any misfortune befel me, I was naturally little ſenſible of it, without daſhing this happy conſtitution with any thoughts of Conſtancy: for Conſtancy is only dwelling longer upon our miſeries. It appears the moſt amiable Virtue in the world to thoſe who are under no afflictions; but is truly an additional torment to ſuch as ſuffer. Reſiſtance only frets us; and inſtead of eaſing the firſt Pain, begets a ſecond: without reſiſtance we ſuffer only the Evils inflicted on us; with it, our own improvements too. For this reaſon, under my preſent Misfortunes, I reſign all to nature; and reſerve my Prudence for ſuch a juncture of time, as I have nothing to ſuffer. Then by reflecting upon my own Indolence, I am pleas'd with the Pains I endure not; and by this means make happy the moſt common ſtate of Life.

Expe-

Experience is form'd with Age; and Wiſdom is commonly the reſult of Experience. But when this Virtue is aſcrib'd to old men, it does not follow that they are always maſters of it. This is certain, that they have always the liberty to be wiſe; and to knock off decently thoſe fetters, which prejudice has put upon the world. They only are allow'd to take things for what they really are. Reaſon has prevail'd in almoſt all the firſt Inſtitutions; but it has been afterwards almoſt quite over-run by Fancy. Now Age only has the power to drive out the one from what ſhe had uſurp'd, and to reſtore the other to what ſhe had loſt.

For my part, I obſerve religiouſly all real Duties. The imaginary I decline or admit, as I like or diſlike them. For in things to which I am not oblig'd, I think it equal Wiſdom to reject what does not pleaſe me, or to accept what does. Every day frees me from one link at leaſt of the chain, nor is it leſs for the advantage of thoſe from whom I diſengage my ſelf, than me who regain my Liberty. They are as great gainers in the loſs of a uſeleſs man, as I ſhould have been a loſer, by idly devoting my ſelf any longer to them.

Of all ties, that of Friendſhip is the only one that is endearing to me; and were it not for the diſgrace of having my Affection ſlighted, I cou'd love merely for the pleaſure of loving; even where I ſhould not be belov'd again. In Love ill plac'd, the ſentiments of Amity entertain us purely by their own agreeable ſweetneſs: but we ought to diveſt our ſelves of a juſt hatred, for the intereſt of our own quiet. Happy were that mind which could entirely reſiſt ſome Paſſions, and only unbend it ſelf to ſome others. It would then be void of Fear, Sadneſs, Hatred, or Jealouſy. It wou'd deſire, without Violence; hope, without Uneaſineſs; and enjoy, without Tranſport.

The ſtate of Virtue is not a ſtate of Indolence. We ſuffer in it, a perpetual conflict betwixt Duty and Inclination. Sometimes we admit what's ſhocking to us, and ſometimes oppoſe what we like; being generally under a Conſtraint, both in what we do, and in what we forbear. The ſtate of Wiſdom is ſweet and calm: it reigns peaceably over our movements, being only to govern well as Subjects, what Virtue was to combat as Enemies.

I can ſay one thing of my ſelf, as extraordinary as true, *viz.* that I never felt in my ſelf any conflict between Paſſion and Reaſon. My Paſſion never oppos'd what I reſolv'd out of Duty; and my Reaſon readily comply'd with what a ſenſe of Pleaſure inclin'd me to. I don't aim at praiſe on account of this eaſy agreement; on the contrary, I confeſs I have often been the more vicious for it. Not out of any perverſe diſpoſition to Evil, but becauſe the Vice was entertain'd as a Pleaſure, inſtead of appearing as a Crime.

It is certain, the nature of things is much better diſcovered by Reflection on them when paſt, than by their impreſſions when felt. Beſides, the great commerce with the world, hinders all attention in youth. What we ſee in others, hinders us from examining well our ſelves. Crouds pleaſe us at an age, when we love (as one may ſay) to diffuſe our ſelves. Multitudes grow troubleſom at another, when we naturally return to our ſelves; or, at moſt, to a few Friends, who are moſt ſtrictly united to us.

'Tis this humour, that inſenſibly withdraws us from Courts. We begin thro' that to ſeek ſome medium between aſſiduous attendance and retirement. We grow afterwards aſham'd to ſhew an old face among young fellows, who, inſtead of taking our Gravity for Wiſdom, laugh at us for appearing in publick Places, where nothing but Gallantry

lantry and Gaity is to be ſeen. Let us not flatter our ſelves with our judgment: a brisk buffoonry will run it down; and the falſe glittering of a youthful fancy, will turn to ridicule, the moſt delicate of our Converſations. If we have wit, let us make a better uſe of it in private Companies; for in a croud the qualities of the mind maintain themſelves but ill, againſt the advantages of the body.

This juſtice which we are oblig'd to do our ſelves, ought not to make us unjuſt to the young men. We ought not ſuperciliouſly to cry up our own times, or with moroſeneſs perpetually run down the preſent, which is favourable to them. Let us not rail at Pleaſures when we are paſt them, or cenſure Diverſions, whoſe only crime is our incapacity to enjoy them.

Our Judgments ought to be always the ſame. We may live, but muſt not judge by humour. There is in mine ſomething ſingular, which makes me attend more the trouble, than the pomp of Magnificence. Shows, Feaſts, and great Aſſemblies, invite me to the ſight of them: but the inconveniencies I muſt ſuffer deter me. The elegant Harmony of Conſorts, engages not me ſo much, as the difficulty of adjuſting them tires me. Plenty diſguſts me at meals; and Rarities ſeem to be an affected curioſity. My fancy cannot recommend any thing to my palate by the ſcarcity. But I am for the choice of things eaſily to be had, that I may preſerve a Delicacy independent upon Fancy.

Of Reading, and the Choice of Books.

I AM as fond of reading as ever, becauſe it depends more particularly on the mind, which decays not like the ſenſes: but, in truth, I ſeek in Books my Pleaſure rather than my Inſtruction. As I have leſs time for practice, I have leſs curioſity to learn. I have more need of a ſtock of life, than of methods of living; and the little that remains, is better entertain'd and cheriſh'd by things agreeable, than inſtructive. The Latin Authors afford me the moſt, and I read whatever I think fine, a thouſand times over without being cloy'd.

A nice choice has confin'd me to a few Books, in which I ſeek rather ſound than fine Wit; and the true Taſte (to uſe a Spaniſh Expreſſion) is generally found in the writings of conſiderable men. I am pleas'd to diſcover in TULLY's *Epiſtles*, both his own Character, and that of thoſe Perſons of Quality that wrote to him. As for TULLY himſelf, he never diveſts himſelf of his Rhetorick; and the leaſt recommendation to his moſt intimate friend, is as artificially inſinuated, as if he were to prepoſſeſs a ſtranger in an affair of the greateſt conſequence in the world. The *Letters* of the reſt have not thoſe turns: but in my mind, they have more good ſenſe than his; and this makes me judge very advantageouſly of the great and general abilities of the Romans at that time.

Our Authors perpetually cry up the age of AUGUSTUS, upon the account of VIRGIL and HORACE; and perhaps more yet upon the ſcore of MECENAS, who encouraged men of Learning, than

than for thoſe men of learning themſelves. It is certain, nevertheleſs, that their Parts, as well as Courages, began at that time to decay. Greatneſs of ſoul was converted to circumſpect Conduct, and ſound Diſcourſe to polite Converſation: and if we conſider what remains of MECENAS, I know not whether he had not ſomething effeminate, which was made to paſs for delicate. MECENAS was AUGUSTUS's great Favourite; the man that pleas'd, and whom all the polite and ſprightly wits endeavour'd to pleaſe: now is it not likely that his Judgment over-rul'd the reſt, that they affected his manner, and aped, as much as they cou'd, his character?

AUGUSTUS himſelf leaves us no great idea of his Latinity. What we ſee of TERENCE; what was reported at Rome of the politeneſs of SCIPIO and LELIUS; the remains of CESAR; and what we have of CICERO, with the complaint of this laſt for the loſs of what he calls *ſales*, *lepores*, *venuſtates*, *urbanitas*, *amœnitas*, *feſtivitas*, *jucunditas*; all theſe together, I ſay, make me believe, upon better conſideration, that we muſt pitch on ſome other time than that of AUGUSTUS, to find the ſound and agreeable Wit of the Romans, as well as the pure and natural graces of their tongue.

It may be ſaid, that HORACE had a very nice palate in all theſe matters; which perſuades me, that the reſt of his Cotemporaries had not. For the nicety of his reliſh conſiſted chiefly in finding the ridicule of others. Were it not for the impertinencies, falſe manners, and affectations which he laugh'd at, his ſenſe wou'd not at this very day appear ſo very juſt.

Of

Of Poetry.

I OWN the Auguſtan age to have been that of excellent Poets; but it follows not, that it was that of ſound Judgment. Poetry requires a peculiar Genius, that agrees not overmuch with good ſenſe. It is ſometimes the language of Gods, ſometimes of Buffoons; rarely that of a Gentleman. It delights in figures and fictions, always beſide the reality of things, tho it be that only, that can ſatisfy a ſound Underſtanding.

Not but that there is ſomething noble in making agreeable Verſes; but we muſt have a great command of our genius, otherwiſe the mind is poſſeſs'd with ſomething foreign, which hinders it from the free management of it ſelf. *He's a Blockhead*, ſays the Spaniard, *that can't make two Verſes, and a Fool that makes four.* I own, if this Maxim prevail'd over all the world, we ſhould want a thouſand fine works, the reading of which gives us a very delicate pleaſure; but this ſaying reſpects men of buſineſs, rather than profeſs'd Poets. Beſides, thoſe that are capacitated for ſuch great performances, will not reſiſt the force of their Genius, for what I can ſay; and it is certain, that amongſt Authors, thoſe only will write few Verſes, who find themſelves more cramp'd by their own barrenneſs, than by my reaſons.

Excellent Poets are as requiſite for our entertainment, as great Mathematicians for our uſe: but it is ſufficient for us to be acquainted with their works, and not to engage our ſelves in the ſolitary Enthuſiaſm of the one, or to exhauſt our ſpirits in Meditation, like the other.

Comick Poets are of all moſt proper for the converſe of the world: for they make it their buſineſs to draw to the life what paſſes in it, and to expreſs the ſentiments and paſſions of Men. How new a turn ſoever may be given to old thoughts, that ſort of Poetry is very tedious which is fill'd with ſimiles of the *Morning*, *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*. Our Deſcriptions of a calm, and a tempeſtuous Sea, repreſent nothing which the Antients have not expreſs'd much better. Now a-days we have not only the ſame Ideas, but the very ſame Expreſſions, and Rhymes. I never hear of the harmony of Birds, but I prepare my ſelf for purling Streams; the Shepherdeſſes are always lolling upon Fern, and you may ſooner find a Grove without a Shade in its proper ſeat, than in our Verſes. This muſt neceſſarily at length be very tedious: which cannot happen in Comedy, where with pleaſure we ſee thoſe things repreſented, which we may perform, and where we feel motions like thoſe we ſee expreſs'd.

A Tale of Woods, Rivers, Meadows, Fields, and Gardens, makes but a very languiſhing impreſſion upon us, unleſs their beauties be wholly new: but what concerns Humanity, its inclinations, tenderneſſes, and affections, finds ſomething in the inmoſt receſſes of our ſouls prepar'd to receive it: the ſame nature produces and receives 'em, and they are eaſily transfus'd from the Actors to the Spectators.

Of

Of ſome Spaniſh, Italian, and French Books.

THE delicacy of Love ſooths me, and its tenderneſs touches me; and as in Spain they love the beſt of any Country in the world, I am never weary of reading in their Authors amorous Adventures. I am more affected with the paſſion of one of their Lovers, than I ſhould be with my own, were I yet capable of any. The very imagination of thoſe Amours raiſes in me certain motions for the Gallant, which I could never feel for my ſelf.

There is, perhaps, as much Wit in the other writings of that Nation, as in ours; but it is a kind of wit that gives no ſatisfaction, except that of CERVANTES in *Don Quixot*, which I could read all my life, without being diſguſted one ſingle moment. Of all the Books I ever read, *Don Quixot* is that of which I ſhou'd be moſt ambitious to have been the Author. Nothing, in my opinion, can contribute more to the forming in us a true taſte of every thing. I wonder how CERVANTES cou'd, as it were out of the mouth of one of the greateſt Fools in the world, ſhew himſelf maſter of all the underſtanding and knowledge imaginable. I admire the variety of his Characters, which are of the moſt uncommon ſtamp in the world, and at the ſame time the moſt natural. QUEVEDO, indeed, appears a very ingenious Author; but I eſteem him more for his thought of burning all his own Books when he read *Don Quixot*, than for having been able to compoſe 'em.

I am not acquainted enough with Italian Poetry to taſte its delicacy, or admire its graces and beauties: I meet with ſome Hiſtories in that tongue above all the Moderns; and ſome Treatiſes of Politicks, even above what the Antients have written. As for the Morality of the Italians, it is full of *Concetti*, or pointed Witticiſms, which rather ſhew a fancy that endeavours to glitter, than a ſolid ſenſe founded on deep reflections.

I have a great curioſity for every thing that is fine in French; and am very much diſtaſted at a thouſand Authors, who ſeem only to have written for the reputation of being Authors. I read not for the credit of having read abundance; which ties me up to certain Books, where I am aſſur'd to meet ſatisfaction.

MONTAIGNE'S *Eſſays*, MALHERBE'S *Poems*, CORNEILLE'S *Tragedies*, and VOITURE'S *Works*, have eſtabliſhed to themſelves, as it were, a title to pleaſe me during life. MONTAIGNE has not the ſame ſucceſs with others, thro' the whole courſe of their lives. As he particularly lays open Men, the young and the old are pleas'd to ſee themſelves in him, by the reſemblance of their thoughts. The ſpace intermediate to theſe Ages, takes 'em off from Nature to other Profeſſions; and then they find leſs in MONTAIGNE that fits 'em. The Art Military employs the General; Politicks the Stateſman; Divinity the Churchman; and Law the Judge. MONTAIGNE returns upon us, when Nature has brought us back again to our ſelves; and when an advanc'd age, in which we truly feel what we are, recalls the Prince as well as his meaneſt Subjects, from a concern for his Dignity, to the more near and ſenſible concern for his Perſon.

I write not this out of any impulſe of Vanity, which prompts men to make their fancies publick. I feel my very ſoul (if I may ſo ſpeak) in what I ſay; and underſtand my ſelf better by expreſſing the Notion I have form'd of my ſelf, than I could by private thoughts and inward reflections. The idea a man has of himſelf by a bare attention to internal meditations, is always a little confus'd. The Image which is outwardly expreſs'd, is much more exact, and gives us a much truer judgment of our ſelves, when it is again ſubmitted to the examination of the mind, after having been laid before our eyes. Beſides, the flattering opinion of our own merit, loſes half its charms, as ſoon as it comes into the light; and the complacency of ſelf-love inſenſibly vaniſhing, leaves behind it only a diſguſt of its ſweetneſs, and ſhame for a vanity as fooliſhly entertain'd, as judiciouſly quitted.

To equal MALHERBE to the Antients, I require nothing finer than his own Compoſitions. I wou'd only ſtrike out of his Works what is not worthy of him. It were injuſtice to make him yield to any one: but it will ſuffice for the honour of our own Judgments, if we make him give place to himſelf.

We may ſay the ſame of CORNEILLE[1]. He would be above all the Tragedians of Antiquity, if he were not in ſome of his Pieces much below himſelf. He is ſo admirable in what is fine, that he takes away all patience for what is indifferent. What in him is not excellent, methinks is naught; not that it is really ſo, but becauſe it wants the perfection of the reſt. It is not enough for him to pleaſe us lightly, he's bound to touch us to the very quick. Some Authors may be allow'd ſimply to move us: and theſe emotions are pleaſing enough, when

[1] *Peter Corneille.*

when we have nothing elſe in view, than to be tenderly affected: but with CORNEILLE our ſouls are prepar'd for Raptures; and if they be not tranſported, they are left in a condition more uneaſy than languor. It is, I confeſs, difficult always to charm; very hard at pleaſure to raiſe a mind from its temper, and, as it were, to unhinge a Soul: but CORNEILLE by having done it ſo often, has laid upon himſelf an obligation to do it always. Let him expunge what is not noble enough for him, and he will leave us in a full admiration of thoſe Beauties which no one can parallel.

I ſhould not excuſe VOITURE for a great many of his *Letters*, which he ought to have ſuppreſs'd, had himſelf been the publiſher [2]: but he was like ſome Fathers, equally kind and prudent, who have a natural affection for their Children, and, in ſecret, cheriſh thoſe that want worth, thereby to avoid expoſing their judgments to the publick by their indulgence. He might have ſhew'd all his fondneſs to ſome of his Works: for there is ſomething in 'em ſo ingenious, ſo polite, ſo fine, and ſo agreeable, that it takes away all reliſh of the *Sales Attici*, and the *Roman Urbanities*; eclipſes quite thro' the Wit of the Italians and the Gallantry of the Spaniards.

We have in French ſome particular Pieces of admirable beauty; ſuch are the *Funeral Orations* of the Queen of England, and that of the Ducheſs of Orleans by the Biſhop of Condom [3]. There is a certain Spirit diffus'd thro' thoſe diſcourſes, which gives us as great an opinion of the Author before he is known, as of his work after 'tis read. His Character is impreſs'd on all that he ſays; ſo that altho

[2] *Voiture's Works were publiſh'd after his death, by his Nephew Pinchéne, aſſiſted by Conrart and Chapelain.*

[3] *James Benigne Boſſuet, firſt Biſhop of Condom, and then of Meaux. He died the twelfth of Auguſt* N. S. 1704.

I never ſaw him, I paſs eaſily from the admiration of his Diſcourſe to that of his Perſon.

Of Converſation.

HOW great ſoever the pleaſure of Reading is to me, yet that of Converſation will ever moſt ſenſibly affect me. The acquaintance of the Ladies would afford me the ſweeteſt, if the ſatiſfaction we find in converſing with the lovely, did not put us to the trouble of being upon our guard againſt their Charms. Yet this is a violence I rarely ſuffer: as my Age renders me unacceptable, my Experience makes me nice; and if they can't be pleas'd with me, I am, by way of return, as hardly ſatisfy'd with them. There are ſome, indeed, whoſe Merits make a conſiderable impreſſion on my mind, but their Beauty has little influence on my heart: and if I am at any time ſurprized by it, I preſently reduce my Paſſion to a pleaſing reaſonable Friendſhip, that has none of the uneaſineſs of Love.

The firſt merit with the Ladies is to be in love with them; the next, the being the Confident of their inclinations; the third, the ingenious improving and ſetting off all that is amiable in them: if nothing will win their hearts, we may, at leaſt, gain upon their minds by praiſe; for next to the Lover, to whom all muſt yield, he pleaſes 'em moſt, who affords 'em means of being better pleas'd with themſelves. When you converſe with them, take great care never to leave 'em in Indifference; they are; from their ſouls, averſe to ſuch coldneſs: wherefore, either make your ſelf belov'd, or indulge their Paſſions, or make 'em find themſelves more lovely. For, after all, Love of ſome ſort or other

other they muſt have; their hearts are never void of that paſſion. Direct a poor heart how to employ it.

'Tis true; ſome of 'em can have eſteem, and even tenderneſs without love; and others there are as capable of ſecrecy as the moſt truſty of our friends. I know ſome that have no leſs Wit and Diſcretion, than Charms and Beauty: but thoſe are rarities, that nature wantonly beſtows on the world, either by deſign or caprice; and we can draw no conſequences in favour of the generality from things ſo particular, and from qualities ſo uncommon. Women ſo extraordinary ſeem to have borrow'd the merit of Men; and, perhaps, 'tis a kind of revolt from their ſex, to ſhake off the natural conditions of it for the real advantages of ours.

I confeſs, I have formerly been more difficult in the choice of the Men with whom I convers'd, than at preſent I am; and I think my ſelf not ſo much a loſer in point of Delicacy, as a gainer in point of Senſe. I then ſought for men that could pleaſe me in every thing, I now ſeek every thing that may pleaſe me in any man. A man in all reſpects agreeable, is too great a rarity, and it is no wiſdom to hunt for what we are hardly ever like to find. That delicacy of Pleaſure, which our Imagination paints to us, is what we ſeldom enjoy; the ſickly nice fancy gives us a diſreliſh of thoſe things which we might poſſeſs, during the whole courſe of our lives. Not that, to ſay truth, it is impoſſible to find ſuch Jewels; but it is very rarely that Nature forms 'em, and that Fortune favours us with 'em. My good ſtars made me know one of this rank in France, and another of equal merit in a foreign Country, who was the whole delight of my life. Death has robb'd me of this treaſure, and I can never think on that cruel day on which my Lord D'AUBIGNY died, but I may ſay, with a true and ſenſible regret,

Quem ſemper acerbum,
Semper honoratum, ſic Dii voluiſtis, habebo. [4]

In the meaſures you will take for Society, you muſt reckon not to find good things ſeparately. Expect to meet ſolidity with prolixity; agreeableneſs with want of ſenſe; and ſcience with ridicule. You will find theſe Qualities promiſcuouſly blended, not only among thoſe men whom we may, at pleaſure, make choice of, or avoid, but even among thoſe whom our intereſt, or other ties as obligatory ſhall bind you to. I have convers'd with a Man of the brighteſt natural parts in the world, who being ſometimes weary of the happy facility of his Genius, engag'd in arguments of Science and Religion, in which he betray'd a ridiculous ignorance. I know one of the moſt learned men in Europe [5], of whom one may learn a thouſand things, curious or profound; in whom, nevertheleſs, you will find a fooliſh credulity in every thing extraordinary, fabulous, or exceeding belief.

That great maſter of the Stage, to whom the Romans are more beholden for the beauty of their ſentiments, than to their own wit or virtue; CORNEILLE, who ſufficiently diſcovers himſelf without being named, becomes an ordinary man when he ſpeaks for himſelf. He dares ſay any thing for a Greek or a Roman: a Frenchman or Spaniard abates his Courage; and when he ſpeaks for him, he is quite diſpirited. He racks his Imagination for all that is noble to adorn his old Heroes, and you would ſay, that he debarr'd himſelf the advantage of his own wealth, as if he were not worthy the uſe of it.

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4 *Virgil.* Æneid. *Lib.* V. *v.* 49, 50.
5 *Dr. Iſaac Voſſius.*

If you know the world perfectly, you will find in it abundance of men valuable for their Talents, and as contemptible for their Failings. Expect not they ſhould always exert their abilities, and diſcreetly cover their infirmities. You ſhall ſee them often ſlight their Virtues, and fondly indulge their Defects. It reſts upon your judgment to make a better choice than themſelves, and by your addreſs, to draw from them that worth, which they could not eaſily communicate.

For theſe ten years paſt, which I have ſpent in foreign Countries, I have found as much Pleaſure, and been as happy in the enjoyment of Converſation, as if I had been all the time in France. I have met with perſons of as great worth as quality, whoſe Society has been the greateſt comfort of my life. I have known men as witty as any I have ever ſeen, who have join'd the Pleaſure of their Friendſhip, to that of their Company. I have known ſome Ambaſſadors of ſuch bright parts, that they ſeem'd to me to make a conſiderable loſs, whenever the duty of their Character ſuſpended the exerciſe of their private excellencies.

I formerly thought that there were no well-bred and polite men but in our Court; that the effeminacy of warmer Climates, and a kind of barbarity in the colder, hinder'd the Natives from being rais'd to this pitch, except very rarely. But experience has, at length, convinc'd me, that there are ſuch every where; and if I have not diſcover'd it ſoon enough, it is becauſe it is difficult for a French Man to reliſh any but thoſe of his own Country. Every Nation has its Excellence, with a certain turn proper and peculiar to its Genius. My Judgment, too much wedded to our own air, rejected as faulty what was foreign to us. Becauſe we ſee them imitate us in the faſhion of things exterior, we wou'd impoſe upon them the imita-

tion of us, even in the dreſs of Virtue too. In truth, the grounds of any eſſential Quality, are every where the ſame: but we endeavour to fit the extrinſicks to our humour; and thoſe among us that pay the greateſt deference to Reaſon, muſt have with it ſomething to gratify their fancies. To ſpeak ingenuouſly, the difference I find between us and others, in the air, or manner that diſtinguiſhes Nations, is, that ours is induſtriouſly affected, and that of other Nations impreſs'd by nature, as it were in an indelible Character.

In all my life, I have never known but two perſons that were univerſally taking, and thoſe two differently. The one had agreeable qualities of all ſorts; for the ordinary ſort of Men, for the Humoriſts, and even for the Fantaſtical; and he ſeem'd to have in his nature wherewith to pleaſe every body. The other had ſo many rare accompliſhments, that he might aſſure himſelf of eſteem where ever Virtue is rever'd. The firſt was inſinuating, and never fail'd to gain the Affections. The ſecond was ſomewhat proud, but yet commanded Eſteem. To complete this difference, a man gave himſelf up with pleaſure to the inſinuations of the former, and ſubmitted oftentimes, tho with reluctance, to the worth of the latter. I had a ſtrict Friendſhip with them both, and can ſay, that I never ſaw any thing in the one, but what was agreeable; or in the other, but what deſerv'd eſteem.

Of Literature and the Civil Law.

WHEN I am depriv'd of the converſation of the Men of the World, I have recourſe to the Learned; and if I meet with men skill'd in polite

polite Literature, I think my ſelf no great loſer by exchanging the delicacy of the preſent, for that of paſt ages. But we rarely meet with perſons that have a true Judgment: which, in many Scholars, renders Literature a very tireſome knowledge. Of all the men I ever knew, Antiquity is the moſt indebted to Mr. WALLER: he lends it his beautiful Imagination, and his nice and delicate Judgment; ſo that he enters into the genius of the Antients, not only to underſtand rightly what they thought, but ſtill to embelliſh their thoughts.

I have ſeen within a few years, abundance of Criticks, and but few good Judges. Now, I don't affect that ſort of learned men, who rack their brains to reſtore a Reading, which is not mended by the reſtitution. The whole myſtery of their Learning lies in what we might as well be ignorant of, and they are abſolute ſtrangers to what's really worth knowing. As they are incapable of having nice Sentiments and Thoughts, ſo 'tis impoſſible for them to enter into the delicacy of a Sentiment, or the fineneſs of a Thought. They may ſucceed well enough in expounding Grammarians, who applied themſelves to the ſame ſtudy, and whoſe genius was the ſame: but they can never hit that of a polite, well-bred man among the Antients, becauſe theirs is diametrically oppoſite to it. In Hiſtory, they neither mind Men nor Affairs: they lay the whole ſtreſs on Chronology; and for the date of a Conſul's Death, will neglect the knowledge of his Character, and of the tranſactions during his Conſulſhip. TULLY, with them, will never be any more than a declaimer of *Orations*; or CESAR than a Writer of *Commentaries*: the Conſul and the General eſcape their notice; the Spirit that animates their Works is unperceiv'd; and the principal matters they treat of, unknown.

I own I value infinitely a *Criticiſm on the Senſe*, if the expreſſion may be allow'd. Such is the excellent work of MACHIAVEL upon the *Decades* of LIVY; and ſuch would be the reflections of Monſieur DE ROHAN upon CESAR's *Commentaries*, had he penetrated deeper into his Deſigns, and expos'd to a clearer light the ſecret ſprings of his Conduct. I muſt own nevertheleſs, that he has equall'd the penetration of MACHIAVEL in his Remarks upon the clemency of CESAR in the Civil Wars. But we may ſee, that his own experience of ſuch Wars, furniſh'd him with abundance of hints for thoſe judicious Obſervations.

Next to the ſtudy of polite Learning (for which I have a more particular affection) I love the ſcience of thoſe great Lawyers and Civilians, who might themſelves be Legiſlators; who re-aſcend to that original Juſtice that ſettled human Society; who know what Liberty nature allows in eſtabliſh'd Governments; and how far the natural liberty of private Perſons is reſtrain'd for the publick good by neceſſary Politicks. Theſe inſtructions might be found in the converſation of M. SLUSE[6], with as much pleaſure as profit. From HOBBES, that great Genius of England, we might alſo receive theſe noble lights; tho with leſs exactneſs, becauſe he carries ſome things too far, and is altogether upon extremes in others.

Were GROTIUS yet alive, all things might be learned of that univerſal Scholar, who is yet more valuable for his Reaſonings than for his Learning. Now he is dead, his Writings reſolve the moſt important difficulties; and were Juſtice only regarded, they might be a ſtanding rule to all Nations in points of War and Peace. His Book, *De Jure*

[6] *A Canon of St. Lambert at Liege; and Brother to M. Sluſe, Secretary of the briefs to the Pope, and afterwards a Cardinal.*

Jure Belli & Pacis, ought to be the chief ſtudy of ſovereign Princes, their Miniſters, and generally of all ſuch as have any ſhare in the Government of the People.

Nay, even the knowledge of that Law which deſcends to the affairs of private Men, ought not to be ſlighted. But this is left to the care of the Gentlemen of the Gown, and denied to Princes as a thing below them; tho every moment of their Reign, they give Decrees, or iſſue out Warrants that extend to the Fortunes, Liberties, and Lives of their Subjects. They are only entertain'd with harangues about Valour, which is only an inſtrument of Deſtruction; and Diſcourſes of Liberality, which is but a more regular method of ſquandering, unleſs they be bounded by Juſtice. 'Tis true, the Doctrine of every Virtue ought to be ſuited to the neceſſities of every one's temper: to infuſe liberality into the Covetous, to excite the Unactive with the thirſt of Glory, and curb, as much as is poſſible, the Ambitious with the reins of Juſtice. But amongſt all the diverſity of tempers, Juſtice is ſtill moſt requiſite; for it keeps up order as well in him that does it, as in them to whom it is done. Nor is this a conſtraint that limits the Power of a Prince; for in doing it to others, he learns to do it to himſelf; and ſo it is in him a voluntary act, tho we neceſſarily receive it from his Power.

I read not an Hiſtory of any Prince better educated than CYRUS the Great. They were not contented exactly to inform him what Juſtice was in all reſpects, but they made him put their Inſtructions in practice, as often as occaſion offer'd; ſo that they did, at the ſame time, imprint the notions of Juſtice on his mind, and eſtabliſh an habit of being juſt in his Soul. The education of ALEXANDER was of ſomewhat too large an extent;

tent: he was taught the knowledge of every thing in nature, but himſelf. His Ambition went afterwards as far as his Learning; and having endeavour'd to know all, he grew deſirous to conquer all. But he had little or no method in his Conqueſts, and abundance of irregularity in his Life; for want of knowing what he ow'd to the publick, to private men, and to himſelf.

No men whatſoever can take too effectual a care to be juſt, for they have naturally too ſtrong a bias the contrary way. Juſtice is the foundation and the fence of all Society; without it we ſhould ſtill be Savages and Vagabonds; and our impetuoſity would ſoon reduce us to our primitive confuſion, out of which we are happily extricated. Yet inſtead of chearfully acknowledging the benefit, we find ſome reluctance in ſubmitting to that happy ſubjection it keeps us in, and ſtill long after that fatal Liberty which would prove the unhappineſs of our Lives.

When the Scripture tells us that the Juſt are few, it means not, in my opinion, that no men are inclin'd to good Works: but it ſeems to intimate, how little they are inclin'd to act as they ſhould, out of a principle of Juſtice. And indeed, were mens good actions examin'd, they would moſt of them be found to have their ſource from the conſideration of ſome other Virtues. Good Nature, Friendſhip, and Benevolence, are the ordinary ſprings from whence they flow: Charity relieves our neighbours wants, Liberality beſtows, and Generoſity obliges: Juſtice, which ought to partake in all, is laid aſide as burdenſome; and neceſſity alone gives it a ſhare in our actions. Nature endeavours to find a kind of Self-complacency in thoſe firſt Virtues, where we act upon pleaſing motives: but in this ſhe finds a ſecret violence, where another's right extorts from us what we owe, and

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we rather acquit our ſelves of our own Obligations, than lay any upon them by our Beneficence.

It is a ſecret averſion to Juſtice that makes us fonder of giving than returning, of obliging than acknowledging. Thus we ſee the moſt liberal, generous men, are not uſually the moſt juſt. Juſtice includes a regularity that lays a conſtraint upon them, as being founded on a conſtant order of Reaſon, oppoſite to thoſe natural impulſes, which are the hinges upon which Liberality almoſt always moves. There is, I know not what heroical in great Liberality, as well as in great Valour; and there is a great analogy between thoſe two Virtues; the one raiſing the Soul above the conſideration of Wealth, and the other puſhing on Courage beyond a concern for Life. But with all theſe gay and generous Motives, without good Conduct, the one becomes ruinous, and the other fatal.

Thoſe whom croſs accidents of Fortune have undone, are pitied by all the world, becauſe it is a misfortune attending the condition of humanity, to which every body is liable: thoſe that are reduc'd to Miſery by vain profuſion, raiſe more contempt than commiſeration; becauſe it is the effect of a private Folly, from which every man has the good conceit to think himſelf free. Add to this, that nature always ſuffers a little by compaſſion, and to relieve her ſelf of an uneaſy thought, ſhe contemplates the folly of the Prodigal, inſtead of reſting upon the proſpect of the Beggar. All things conſider'd, it is enough for private men to be beneficent; nor ought this to proceed from a facility of nature, that lazily parts with what it has not ſtrength to keep. I deſpiſe the weakneſs which is prepoſterouſly call'd *Liberality*; and hate no leſs the vanity of thoſe that never do a kindneſs but for the pleaſure of boaſting of it.

Of

Of Ingratitude.

THere are not ſo many Ungrateful men as 'tis generally thought; becauſe there are not ſo many generous men as we imagine. He that in ſilence ſuppreſſes a favour receiv'd, is an unthankful man, that deſerv'd it not. But he that proclaims one that he has done, turns it to an Injury, ſhewing to your diſgrace the neceſſity you had of him, and the relief he has given you thro' oſtentation. I would have a man of honour ſomewhat ſhy of receiving Obligations, and ſenſible of them when receiv'd: I would have him that obliges, ſatisfied with the generoſity of the Action, and not think of any acknowledgment from the party oblig'd. When a return is expected, it is no longer Liberality; it is a ſort of Trade, which the Spirit of Intereſt would introduce into Favours.

'Tis true, there are ſome perſons whom nature has made ungrateful: Ingratitude is the main ingredient in their compoſition; with that their Heart, their Soul, and every part is ſeaſon'd: they make no returns to Love, not becauſe they are hard and inſenſible, but becauſe they are ungrateful.

This *Ingratitude*, which is rooted in one's *Heart* or *Conſtitution*, is, of all the kinds of it, the moſt oppoſite to Humanity: for generous Perſons may ſometimes ſhake off the remembrance of a benefit, to eaſe themſelves of the trouble that ſome Obligations are apt to give. But Friendſhip knits, not fetters us together; and without ſome extraordinary violence to nature, it is impoſſible to reſiſt its tender engaging Charms.

I am inclin'd to believe that Women ought not to reſiſt ſo generous a ſentiment, whatever pretence may be ſuggeſted, from a regard for Virtue. And indeed, they think themſelves virtuous, and are only ungrateful, when they refuſe their affection to paſſionate Lovers, who ſacrifice every thing for them. To be too kind, would be a treſpaſs on the rights of Honour; not to be ſenſible enough, is to croſs the nature of their Hearts, which they ought to keep free from perturbation, if poſſible, but not from a tender impreſſion.

The *Ingratitude of the Soul* is a natural propenſity, not to acknowledge a Service, even without a regard to Intereſt. Avarice may ſometimes ſuppreſs an acknowledgment, to avoid the expence of a return; but pure Ingratitude is, without farther deſign in it ſelf, averſe to all Requitals.

There is another ſort of Ingratitude, founded on a conceit of our own worth, when Self-love repreſents a favour beſtow'd upon us, as a piece of juſtice done to us.

The love of Liberty has likewiſe its Ingratitude, as well as Self-love. The only ſubjection it allows, is to the Laws; but out of abhorrence of a dependence, it hates the memory of Obligations that ſhew a ſuperiority in the Benefactor. This makes Republicans ungrateful. They think that a diminution of their Liberty, which is allow'd to Gratitude. Thus BRUTUS thought it meritorious to ſacrifice his Obligations to Liberty. All the kindneſſes heap'd on him were converted to injuries, when he began to look upon them as fetters. To ſum up all, he cou'd kill a Benefactor that was like to become a Maſter. An abominable villany amongſt the partiſans of Gratitude! An admirable virtue with the ſticklers of Liberty!

As there are men purely ungrateful, out of a mere ſenſe of Ingratitude, ſo there are ſome mere-

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ly thankful, out of a pure ſenſe of thankfulneſs. Their Hearts are ſenſible not only of good turns, but even of good-will too; and have of themſelves a propenſity to acknowledge all manner of Obligations.

According to the great diverſity which is found both in Gratitude and Ingratitude, there are ſome poor Spirits that think themſelves oblig'd by every thing, as well as vain humours, that think themſelves oblig'd by nothing.

If Self-conceit has its proud ingrates, Diſtruſt of merit has its weak thankful ones, that take common juſtice for a particular obligation. This diffidence produces an Inclination to Subjection, and the latter is the diſtinguiſhing Character of this kind of thankful men. As they are incumber'd with Liberty, and aſham'd of Servitude, they raiſe up chimerical Obligations, to give an honourable colour to their dependence.

I will not reckon among the Grateful, thoſe poor wretches that think themſelves oblig'd, for not being hurt. They are not only Slaves, but Slaves that have not even the courage to hope well. To theſe wretches, all treatment that is not rigorous is favourable, and every thing that is not an Injury, they think a Benefit.

I have but one word more to ſay about a certain Gratitude of Courtiers, which has not ſo much reſpect to the paſt, as deſign upon the future. They acknowledge Obligations to thoſe whom fortune has plac'd in any poſt to oblige them; and by an affected Gratitude for favours never done, inſinuate themſelves into thoſe, in whoſe power it is to do them, and induſtriouſly put themſelves in the way of them. This artificial acknowledgment, as 'tis undoubtedly no Virtue, ſo neither is it a Vice, but rather a dexterity, which it is lawful for

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a man either to make uſe of, or guard himſelf againſt.

The great ones in requital, have a trick as artificial to excuſe themſelves from doing kindneſſes, as the Courtiers can have to engage them to it. They reproach men with Services never done, and complain of Ingratitude, tho they have hardly ever obliged any one, to draw from hence a ſpecious pretence to oblige no body.

But let us diſmiſs this affected Gratitude, and theſe myſterious complaints of Ingratitude; and let us ſee what is to be wiſh'd for in the pretences to, and the diſtribution of, Benefits. I could wiſh in thoſe that claim them, more Merit than Addreſs; and in the Diſpoſers, more Generoſity than Oſtentation.

Juſtice reſpects every thing in the diſtribution of Favours; it regulates the Liberality of the giver, and weighs the Merit of the receiver. Generoſity thus circumſtantiated is an admirable Virtue: otherwiſe, it is the motion of a Soul truly noble, but ill-govern'd; or a wild vain-glorious humour, that thinks Reaſon a clog to it.

There are ſo many things to be conſider'd in the diſtribution of Benefits, that the ſafeſt way is always to obſerve ſtrict Juſtice, and conſult Reaſon equally, both as to thoſe we make the objects of them, and about what we are able to give. But even among thoſe that intend ſtrict juſtice, how many are miſguided by the error of their temper, either in rewarding or puniſhing? When we give way to inſinuation, and yield to complaiſance, Self-love repreſents to us as Juſtice, a Laviſhneſs to them that flatter us; and we reward them for the artifice they uſe, to deceive our Judgments, and impoſe upon the imbecillity of our Wills.

They deceive themſelves yet more eaſily, who miſtake a moroſe ſevere temper for an inclination to

Juſtice. The itch of puniſhing is ingenious in them to ſet an ill gloſs upon every thing. Pleaſure with them is vice, and Error a crime. A man muſt diveſt himſelf of humanity to eſcape their rigour. Miſled by a falſe notion of Virtue, they think they chaſtiſe Criminals, while they delight in tormenting the Miſerable.

If Juſtice appoints a great Puniſhment, (which is ſometimes neceſſary) it is proportion'd to ſome great Crime; but is never harſh or rigorous. Severity and Rigour are no part of it, but ſpring from the humours of thoſe perſons that think they practiſe it. As theſe ſorts of puniſhments flow from Juſtice without Rigour, ſo likewiſe does Pardon in ſome caſes, rather than from Clemency. To pardon faults of error, is but juſtice to the failings of our nature: the indulgence we ſhew to Women that have intrigues, is likewiſe rather a juſtice to their weakneſs, than a pardon of their ſin.

Of Religion.

I Might deſcend to ſeveral other particulars relating to Juſtice; but it is now high time to proceed to Religion, which ought to be our principal care. None but madmen can depend upon a Life that muſt certainly have an end, and which may end every hour.

Mere curioſity will make us inquiſitive to know what ſhall become of us after Death. We are too dear to our ſelves to conſent to our intire loſs: Self-love ſecretly oppoſes the notion of Annihilation. We are deſirous to exiſt always, and the Mind, which is concern'd in its own preſervation, improves this deſire, by affording ſome light into a thing of it ſelf ſo obſcure. On the other hand, the Body find-

ing by certain experience that it must die, and being unwilling to die alone, furnishes reasons to involve the Soul in one common ruin; whilst the Soul frames one to believe, it may subsist for ever. I have searched for all the light I could, both from the Antients and Moderns, to assist my reflections in diving into so abstruse a mystery: I have read all that has been written on the *Immortality of the Soul*, and after I have done so with all possible attention, the clearest proof that I find of the eternity of my Soul, is my own constant desire that it may be so.

I wish I had never read Monsieur DESCARTES's *Meditations*: the great Reputation of that excellent man among us, would have given me some belief of the Demonstration he promises us; but there appeared to me more vanity in the assurance he gives us, than solidity in his arguments; and how desirous soever I was to be convinc'd by his Reasons, all that I can do in his favour or my own, is to remain in the uncertainty I was in before.

I left the study of Metaphysicks to make an enquiry into Religions, and returning to that Antiquity which I respect so much, I found among the Greeks and Romans, nothing but a superstitious idolatrous Worship, or politick human Contrivances, establish'd for the Government of Men. It was not difficult for me to see the advantages of the Christian Religion over all the rest; and using all my endeavours to submit my self with reverence to the belief of its Mysteries, I let my Reason taste with pleasure the purest and most perfect Morality in the world.

Amidst the diversity of Beliefs that divide Christianity, the true Catholick engages me as well by my own free election, were I yet to chuse, as by the habitual impression it has long since made upon me. But this adherence to my own, does not ani-

mate me againſt other peoples belief; and I never entertain'd that indiſcreet zeal which inſpires a hatred for ſome perſons, becauſe they do not agree with us in opinion. This falſe Zeal is the reſult of Self-love; and a ſecret deceit repreſents to us an exceſs of complacency in our own Sentiments, under the form of Charity towards our Neighbours.

What we now call RELIGIONS, is indeed but *a difference in Religion*, and not *a different Religion*. I rejoice that my Faith is more ſound than a Proteſtant's: yet inſtead of hating him for this difference of opinion, I love him becauſe he agrees with me in the Fundamentals. The means at length to agree in the whole, is always to communicate in ſomething. A deſire of Re-union can never be inſpir'd, till the enmity that ariſes from diviſion be ſuppreſs'd. Men may ſeek one another as ſociable, but they never re-unite with their Enemies. Diſſimulation and Hypocriſy in Religion, are the only things that ought to be odious: for whoever believes ſincerely, altho his Belief ſhould be wrong, deſerves Pity, and not Perſecution. Blindneſs in the body beſpeaks our Compaſſion; why then ſhould that of the mind excite our Hatred? Under the ſevereſt Tyranny of former ages, the Underſtanding was allow'd its full liberty; but now a-days there are notions among Chriſtians, wherein the perſuaſion of what one cannot believe is impos'd as a Law! In my opinion, every body ought to be free in his Belief, provided it does not tend to raiſe Factions that may endanger the publick Tranquillity. Churches do of right belong to Sovereigns; according to whoſe will and pleaſure they are either open'd or ſhut up; but our own hearts are a private Church, wherein we are allow'd to worſhip their Maſter[7].

Beſides

[7] *The Emperor Conſtantius Chlorus, tho a Pagan, was contented.*

Beſides the difference of Doctrine in ſome points peculiar to every Sect, I obſerve, as it were, a ſort of particular Spirit that diſtinguiſhes them. The Catholick tends particularly to the Love of God, and good Works. We look upon this firſt Being as an Object ſovereignly amiable, and tender Souls are touch'd with the ſweet and agreeable Impreſſions it makes on them. Good Works follow neceſſarily from this principle; for Love once receiv'd within, actuates us without, and puts us upon endeavouring all we can to pleaſe him we love. All we have to fear in this caſe is, leſt the ſource of this Love, the Heart, ſhould be corrupted by the mixture of any Paſſion altogether human. It is likewiſe to be feared, that inſtead of obeying the Ordinance of God, we ſhould frame methods of ſerving him according to our own fancies. But if this Love be real and pure, nothing in the world yields ſuch true ſweetneſs and ſatisfaction. The inward joy of devout Souls, riſes from a ſecret aſſurance they have of being agreeable to God; and the true mortifications, and holy auſterities are nothing elſe but affectionate Sacrifices of themſelves.

The Reformed Religion diveſts men of all confidence in their own merit. The opinion of Predeſtination, which they begin to be diſguſted with, but dare not forego, leſt they ſhould be thought to recant, leaves the Mind languid, unmov'd, without affection, under pretence of waiting with ſubmiſſion for the will of Heaven. They are contenſt barely to obey, and ſeek not to pleaſe; and in a ſet common Worſhip, make God the object rather

ſented to pull down the Churches of the Chriſtians, and would permit no other violence againſt them. CONSTANTIUS, ne diſſentire à majorum præceptis videretur, Conventicula, id eſt parietes qui reſtitui poterant, dirui paſſus eſt; verum autem Dei Templum quod eſt in hominibus, incolume ſervavit. Lact. *de Mort. Perſ.* § 15.

of their Regularity than their Love. To preſerve Religion in its Purity, the Calviniſts endeavour to reform every thing that appears human; but ſometimes to debar man of what is human, they retrench too much of what is addreſs'd to God. Their diſlike of our Ceremonies, makes them induſtrious to refine upon us: yet when they have attain'd to this dry naked Purity, they find not in themſelves a ſufficient ſtock of Devotion; and thoſe that are pious amongſt them excite in themſelves a particular Spirit, which they think ſupernatural; ſo much are they diſguſted with a Regularity which to them ſeems too common.

There are in matters of Worſhip two ſorts of humours. The one wou'd be always adding to, and the other always retrenching what is eſtabliſhed. In the firſt, there is a hazard of giving too much out-ſide to Religion, and covering it with ſo many exteriors, that the real ground of it cannot be ſeen thro' them. In the other, the danger is, leſt after having retrench'd all that appears ſuperfluous, Religion it ſelf ſhould be cut off. The Catholick might, indeed, ſpare ſome Ceremonies; yet that hinders not, but that men of underſtanding may ſee well enough thro' them. The Reform'd uſe too little, and their ordinary Worſhip is not ſufficiently diſtinguiſh'd from the common functions of Life. In Places where it is not tolerated, the difficulty prevents their diſguſt, and the diſpute raiſes a warmth that animates them. Where it rules, it produces only an exact compliance with Duty, ſuch as either the Civil Government, or any other obligation might do.

As for Good Works among the Reformed, they are only the effects of their Faith, and the reſult of their Belief. We are agreed on both ſides, that every Chriſtian is bound to believe, and live aright, but our ways of expreſſing it differ: they ſay, that

that *good Works without Faith are but dead Works*; and we, that *Faith without good Works is but dead Faith.*

The Miniſter MORUS was wont to ſay amongſt his friends, "That his Church had ſomething too "hard in its Tenets, and he adviſed People never "to read St. PAUL's *Epiſtles*, without ending with "that of St. JAMES's; for fear, ſaid he, leſt St. "PAUL's heat againſt the merit of Good Works, "ſhould inſenſibly make us ſomewhat remiſs in "the practice of them."

It may, in my opinion, be affirm'd, That St. PETER and St. JAMES, who preach'd to people ſunk into ſuch deep Corruption as the Jews were, had reaſon to enforce the neceſſity of Good Works; for thereby they preſcrib'd to them what they wanted, and of which they might themſelves be convinc'd. But theſe Apoſtles would have little advanc'd their Miniſtry by a diſcourſe about Grace, with a People who thought they had more Faith than all the world beſides; who had ſeen the Miracles perform'd in their favour; and who had a thouſand times experienc'd the viſible aſſiſtances of a God.

St. PAUL acted no leſs wiſely with the Gentiles; it being certain that he would have converted but few people to JESUS CHRIST by the argument of Good Works. The Gentiles were juſt and temperate, upright and innocent, firm and reſolute, to ſuch a degree as to die for their Country. Now to preach Good Works to them, was no more than what the Philoſophers did, who taught them to live well. I own, JESUS CHRIST's Morals were purer, but they had nothing that could make a ſufficient impreſſion on their minds. It was therefore fitting to preach to them the neceſſity of Grace, and, as much as was poſſible, to ſuppreſs the confidence they had on their Virtue.

Methinks, that ſince the Reformation, of which the Immorality of the Clergy was either the pretence or reaſon: methinks, I ſay, that ſince that time Chriſtianity has been made to conſiſt in the Doctrine of Articles of Belief. Thoſe that ſet up the Reformation arraign'd our corruption and vice, and now a-days we object againſt them our Good Works. The very ſame perſons that reproach'd us with ill living, will now take no other advantage of us than that of pretending to a purer Faith. We allow the neceſſity of Belief, but Charity was commanded by JESUS CHRIST, and the Doctrine of Myſteries was not eſtabliſh'd till a long time after his Death. He did not himſelf expreſs ſo clearly what he was, as what he required; from whence we may conclude, that he rather choſe to be obey'd, than to make himſelf known. Our Faith is obſcure, but our Law is very clearly expreſſed. The neceſſary points of our Faith, are above our apprehenſion; but thoſe of our Duty are ſuited to the capacities of all the world. In a word, GOD has given us light enough to do well; and we would indulge with it our curioſity of knowing too much; and inſtead of acquieſcing in what he is pleaſed to diſcover to us, we would pry into what he has conceal'd from us.

I know that the contemplation of heavenly things does ſometimes happily diſengage us from the world: but it is frequently no more than mere ſpeculation, and the reſult of a Vice very natural to mankind. The immoderate Ambition of knowledge extends it ſelf beyond nature, even ſo far as to enquire into what is moſt myſterious in its Author, not ſo much out of a deſign to adore him, as out of a vain curioſity of knowing all things. This vice is cloſe attended by another; Curioſity breeds Preſumption; and being as bold in defining, as indiſcreet in inquiring, we erect, as it were, an infallible

infallible Science of thoſe things which are to us altogether inconceivable. So depravedly do we uſe the will and underſtanding! we proudly aſpire to know every thing, and cannot; we may religiouſly obſerve every thing, and will not. Let us be juſt, charitable, and patient, according to the principles of our Religion, and we ſhall know and obſerve at the ſame time.

I leave it to our Doctors to refute the errors of the Calviniſts, 'tis enough for me to be perſuaded that our opinions are the ſounder. But if rightly apprehended, I dare ſay the Spirit of both Religions is differently grounded on good Principles; only one extends farther the exerciſe of Good Works; with the other, the cautions to avoid Evil, are more exact. The Catholick with an active reſolution, and loving induſtry, is perpetually ſeeking ſome new way of pleaſing God. The Reformed, ſtinted by circumſpection and reſpect, dares not venture beyond a known precept, for fear by imagin'd novelties, of giving too much ſway to his fancy.

To be always diſputing points of Doctrine, is not the means to reunite us. Arguments being inexhauſtible, the Controverſy will laſt as long as there are men to manage it. But if we would leave theſe Diſputes, that only ſerve to exaſperate us, and return without paſſion to that particular Spirit which diſtinguiſhes us, it will not be impoſſible to find a general one in which we may agree.

Let us Catholicks bridle the reſtleſs Zeal, that makes us act a little too much of our own heads. Let the Reformed ſhake off their unactive regularity, and animate their langour, without departing from their ſubmiſſion to Providence. Let us retrench ſomething in condeſcenſion to them, and let them admit ſomething more in complaiſance to us. Then, without thinking either of *Free-will*

or *Predeſtination*, we ſhall frame inſenſibly a true rule for our actions, which will be follow'd by that of our opinions.

If we come to a reconciliation of wills upon the good conduct of Life, it will ſoon produce a good underſtanding in Doctrine. Let us but join in Good Works, and we ſhall not long be of ſeparate Faiths.

I conclude from this ſhort Diſcourſe, that it is an ill method of converting men, to attack them by affronting their Judgments. A man defends his notions either as true, or as his own [8]; and however it be, he raiſes a hundred objections againſt the perſon that wou'd convince him. Nature has given to every one his proper ſenſe, and ſeems to have engag'd him to it by a ſecret fond indulgence. He can ſubmit to the will of another, tho he be free: he can own himſelf inferiour in Courage and Virtue; but he is aſham'd to confeſs a ſubmiſſion to another man's Senſe: his moſt natural reluctance is to acknowledge a ſuperiority of Reaſon in any one whomſoever.

Our chief advantage is to be born reaſonable: our greateſt jealouſy is to find that others pretend to be ſo, more than our ſelves. If we conſult the Converſions of antient times, we ſhall find that the Souls were mov'd, but the Underſtandings very little convinc'd. The firſt diſpoſition to receive the truths of Chriſtianity is form'd in the Heart. In things purely natural, 'tis the mind's part to conceive, and its knowledge goes before the affection for the objects: in things ſupernatural, the Soul is taken, it is affected, it adheres, and unites it ſelf, without ever comprehending them.

Heaven has better prepar'd our Hearts for the impreſſions of God's Grace, than our Underſtandings

[8] *This is one of Montaigne's reflections.*

ings for Illumination. His immenſity confounds our narrow Intellects: his bounty agrees better with our Love. There is I know not what within us, that ſecretly pleads for a GOD, whom we cannot comprehend; and hence it is, that to ſucceed in the Converſion of men, we muſt ſettle a pleaſing commerce with them, by means of which we may inſpire them with the ſame movements: for in diſputes of Religion, the mind in vain ſtrains it ſelf to make us ſee what we ſee not; but in a ſweet and pious familiarity, it is eaſy for the Soul to infuſe Sentiments.

To conſider well the Chriſtian Religion, wou'd make one think, that God had depriv'd it of the light of our Minds, that it might turn more upon the motions of our Hearts. *To love God and our Neighbour* includes all, ſays St. PAUL. And what is this, but to require a diſpoſition of Heart as well towards God as Man? It is properly to oblige us to do out of a principle of Love, what the Civil Government enjoins by rigorous Laws, and Morality preſcribes by a ſevere order of Reaſon.

Charity makes us relieve and ſuccour, while Juſtice forbids us to do wrong. The latter with difficulty hinders oppoſition; the other with pleaſure, procures relief. Thoſe who have the true ſentiments that our Religion inſpires, can't be unfaithful to a Friend, or ungrateful to a Benefactor. With theſe good ſentiments, a Heart innocently loves thoſe objects God has made amiable, and the moſt innocent part of our Loves is the moſt charming and tender.

Let groſs and ſenſual perſons complain of our Religion for the conſtraint it lays upon them; yet the nice and refined will commend it for ſparing them diſguſts and repentance. More skilful than voluptuous Philoſophy in the ſcience of Pleaſures,

and

and wiſer than ſevere Philoſophy in point of Morality, it refines our taſte to Delicacy, and our ſentiments to Innocence. Look upon man in a civil Society, if Juſtice be neceſſary, yet 'tis a reſtraint to him. In the pure ſtate of Nature, his Liberty will have ſomething of barbarity in it; and if he govern himſelf by Morality, his Reaſon is auſtere. All other Religions ſtir up in the mind tempeſtuous thoughts, and troubleſom Paſſions. They raiſe againſt nature ſuperſtitious fears, or a furious zeal; ſometimes to the ſacrificing our Children, like AGAMEMNON; at other times to the devoting our ſelves, like DECIUS. Only the Chriſtian Religion compoſes all our Inquietudes, ſoftens all our Fierceneſs, ſets all our tender Movements a going, not only for our friends and neighbours, but for the indifferent, and even for our enemies.

This is the end of the Chriſtian Religion, and this was once the practice of it. If it be otherwiſe now, it is becauſe we have let it loſe its influence on our hearts, and given way to the encroachments of our imaginations upon it. Hence ſprings the diviſion of our minds about Faith, inſtead of the union of our wills in Good Works; inſomuch, that what ought to be a band of Charity betwixt men, is now become the ſubject of their Quarrels, Jealouſies and ill nature.

From this diverſity of Opinions has ariſen that of Parties; and the adherence to Parties has caus'd Perſecutions and Wars. Many thouſands have died in diſputing about the manner of receiving, what, 'twas agreed on all hands, they did receive in the Sacrament. 'Tis a miſchief that ſtill continues, and will laſt till Religion quits the curioſity of our minds for the tenderneſs of our hearts; and diſguſted with the fooliſh preſumption of our

Inquiries,

Inquiries, returns to the ſweet motions of our Love.

A PROBLEM

In imitation of the Spaniards:

TO MADAM

DE QUEROUALLE[1].

I Know not which of the two is more injurious to the happineſs of the Fair-Sex; "Either to "abandon themſelves wholly to their Inclinations, "or ſtrictly to follow the dictates of Virtue; and "whether the indulging their Paſſions be attended "with more Misfortunes, than they are depriv'd "of Pleaſures by the conſtraint they lay on them-"ſelves." I have met with amorous Ladies lamenting themſelves for the contempt they were fallen into: I have ſeen Prudes groaning under the ſeverities of Virtue; and who endeavour'd by ſighs to eaſe their ſwelling Heart of the ſecret torment they endur'd, by not daring to indulge their Paſſion: in ſhort, as I have ſeen the one regret the Reputation they had loſt, ſo have I ſeen others wiſh for the Pleaſures they durſt not enjoy. Happy is

[1] *She came into England in the year* 1670, *and was created Dutcheſs of Portſmouth in* 1673. *See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *under the year* 1670.

is the Woman, who knows how to behave herſelf diſcreetly, without curbing her Inclinations! for as it is a diſgrace for one of her Sex to abandon herſelf to Love, without any regard to her Fame; 'tis on the other ſide, a great mortification to paſs her life without an Amour.

To avoid this laſt misfortune, you will do well to follow an Advice, which I deſign to give you without any by-end. Do not too ſeverely reject Temptations, which in this Country offer themſelves with more modeſty than is required, even in a Virgin, to hearken to them. You may, perhaps, be ſo vain, as to be pleas'd with no one but your ſelf: but you'll be ſoon tired with being pleas'd and lov'd by no body elſe; and whatever complacency Self-love may afford, you will ſtand in need of another's Love for your real ſatisfaction and entertainment. Yield therefore to the ſweets of Temptations, inſtead of conſulting your Pride. The latter would ſoon perſuade you to return to France; and France, as 'tis the fate of many others, would throw you into a Nunnery: but tho your own free choice ſhould lead you to that melancholy place of retirement, you ought, however, to have made your ſelf worthy of entring it before-hand. What figure will you make there, if you want the Character of a Penitent? The true Penitent afflicts and mortifies herſelf on ther emembrance of her Faults: but what can a harmleſs innocent Maiden repent of? You will appear ridiculous to the other Nuns, who have juſt reaſon to repent, for repenting only out of mere grimace.

Another inconveniency which you will not fail to meet with, is, that inſtead of carrying to the Convent a diſguſt for Love, the very Convent will ſuggeſt to you the thoughts of it. That holy Place turns Love into Devotion, when one has had no experience of this Paſſion. In ſuch a caſe, all the fervency

fervency of your Zeal being converted into Love, you will in vain figh for its Pleaſures; and in the difficulty of enjoying them, you will, for your own torment, perpetually repreſent to your ſelf, how eaſy it was for you to come at them in the world. Thus you will either be conſumed with Regrets, or devour'd by Wiſhes, according as your mind turns either to the remembrance of what you might have done, or to the thought of what you can do no more.

But what you'll find moſt ſtrange in a Nunnery is, that your Reaſon will contribute as much as your Paſſion to make you unhappy. The more knowledge you have, the more you will ſuffer by the imbecillity and ignorance of an old Abbeſs; and the light of your underſtanding will only ſerve to excite murmurings in your heart. Under a mortify'd Countenance you will harbour rebellious thoughts; and obeying orders which you cannot either ſincerely ſubmit to, or openly oppoſe, you will linger out uncomfortable days in repining at your Condition, with the outward grimace of a Sham-Penitent. A melancholy Life this, dear Siſter, to be oblig'd, for cuſtom-ſake, to mourn for a Sin one has not committed, at the very time one begins to have a deſire to commit it!

This is the miſerable condition of harmleſs Virgins, who carry their innocence to a Nunnery! They are unhappy in it, for not having laid a good foundation for their Repentance: a foundation ſo neceſſary to religious Houſes, that of mere pity we ſhall be oblig'd to ſend you to Epſom, Tunbridge, or the Bath, that you may, if poſſible, have ſome ſmall occaſion for Penance.

Whether, as I wiſh, you remain in the World, or as I fear, you retreat out of it, it is your intereſt to adjuſt and agree two things, that ſeem incompatible, but are not ſo, I mean *Love* and *Diſ-*

cretion. You may, perhaps, have been told, that 'tis better not to love at all, than to love with ſuch a conſtraint; but the rule of this diſcretion has nothing auſtere in it, ſince it only requires the loving but one Perſon at one time. That Lady who loves many, abandons herſelf: and of this kind of good, as of all others, the uſe is commendable, and the profuſion diſhonourable.

A LETTER TO COUNT D'OLONNE.

AS ſoon as I heard of your diſgrace [1], I did my ſelf the honour to write to you, to aſſure you how much I was concern'd at it: and the buſineſs of this Letter is to let you know, that we ought at leaſt to avoid that troubleſom companion, Melancholy, at a time when it is not in our power to reliſh Joy. If there be any polite Gentlemen where you are, their Converſation may make ſome amends for that which you have loſt. But if you find none there, Books and good Cheer may help to ſupply that defect, and afford you no ordinary Conſolation. I talk to you like a Maſter who is able to give Leſſons; not that I preſume upon

[1] *Count d'Olonne, M. de Vineuil, the Abbé d'Effiat, and two or three others, having talk'd pretty freely of the King, were baniſh'd the Court in* 1674. *Count d'Olonne was firſt confin'd in the City of Orleans; but he had, afterwards, leave to retire to his ſeat of Montmirel, near Villers-Cotrets.*

upon the ſuperiority of underſtanding: but I fancy I have ſome right to aſſume an authority over perſons that are novices in Diſgrace, by the long experience I have had of Misfortunes, and unlucky Accidents.

Amongſt the Books you are to chuſe for your entertainment in the Country, apply your ſelf principally to thoſe that ſtrike in with your humour, rather than thoſe that pretend to fortify your mind by Arguments and Reaſonings. The latter engage and combat the evil, which is always done at the expence of the Perſon, in whom this conflict happens; the firſt make it to be forgotten, and it is no hard matter to make joy ſucceed to obliterated grief.

Morality is only proper to form methodically a good Conſcience; and I have ſeen ſeveral grave and compoſed men come out of its ſchool, whoſe aukward Prudence made them ridiculous. Men of true honour and good breeding need none of theſe Lectures; for as they know what's good purely by the exactneſs of their taſte, ſo they are diſpoſed to it by their own motion. Not but that there are certain occaſions, where its aſſiſtance is not to be rejected; but where we want its aid, we ſhould be glad to have none of theſe occaſions.

If you were reduc'd to the neceſſity of having your veins open'd, and bleeding to death, I would allow you to read SENECA, and to imitate him: tho I would rather chuſe the indifference of PETRONIUS, than an affected forc'd conſtancy, which is not attain'd without great difficulty.

If you were of a humour to devote your ſelf for your Country, I would adviſe you to read nothing but the Lives of thoſe old Romans, who courted a glorious Death for the good of their Nation: but conſidering your preſent circumſtances,

I think you lie under an obligation to live for your ſelf, and to ſpend the remainder of your Life as agreeably as you can. Now this being your caſe, leave off all ſtudy of Wiſdom, which will neither contribute to the leſſening of your Troubles, nor to the regaining of your Pleaſures. You may ſeek for conſtancy in SENECA, but will find nothing in him but ſeverity. PLUTARCH will be leſs troubleſom; however, he will make you grave and ſerious, rather than ſedate. MONTAIGNE will bring you acquainted with human Nature better than any other; but then 'tis human Nature with all its weakneſſes: a knowledge uſeful indeed in Proſperity to teach moderation; but ſad and afflicting in adverſe Fortune.

Let not the unhappy, therefore, learn from Books to be diſturb'd at our miſeries, but to laugh at our follies: for which reaſon you will prefer the reading of LUCIAN, PETRONIUS, and DON QUIXOT, before that of SENECA, PLUTARCH, and MONTAIGNE. I recommend to you DON QUIXOT above all; let your affliction be what it will, the delicacy of his ridicule will inſenſibly make you reliſh mirth.

You'll tell me, perhaps, that I was not of ſo gay a humour in my own Misfortunes, as I appear to be in yours; and that it is ill breeding in a man to beſtow all his concern upon his own Misfortunes, and be indifferent to, nay, and even merry with the Calamities of his Friends. I ſhould agree with you in that, if I behaved my ſelf ſo: but I can honeſtly affirm to you, that I am little leſs concerned at your Exile than your ſelf; and the little mirth which I adviſe you to, is in order to have a ſhare of it my ſelf, when I ſhall find you capable of receiving it.

As for what relates to my own Misfortunes, if I have formerly appear'd to you more afflicted under

der them, than I ſeem to be at preſent, it is not becauſe I was ſo indeed. I was of opinion that diſgraces exacted from us the decorum of a melancholy Air; and that this apparent Mortification was a reſpect due to the will of our Superiors, who ſeldom bethink themſelves of puniſhing us, without a deſign to afflict us. But then you are to know, that under a ſad out-ſide and mortified countenance, I gave my ſelf all the ſatisfaction I could find in my ſelf; and all the pleaſure I could take in the Converſation of my Friends.

After having found the vanity of that grave temper we learn from Morality, I ſhould grow ridiculous my ſelf, if I continued ſo ſerious a diſcourſe; which makes me proceed to give you ſome Advice that ſhall be leſs troubleſom than Inſtructions.

Adapt, as much as poſſibly you can, your palate and appetite to your health; 'tis a great ſecret to be able to reconcile the agreeable and neceſſary in two things, which have been almoſt always oppoſite. Yet after all, to arrive at this great myſtery, we want nothing but Sobriety and Niceneſs; and what ought not a man to do, that he may learn to chuſe thoſe delicious diſhes at his Meals, which will keep both his Mind and Body in a good diſpoſition all the remainder of the day? A man may be ſober without being nice, but he can never be nice without being ſober. Happy is the perſon that enjoys both theſe qualities together! for thus his Pleaſure is even inſeparable from his Diet.

Spare no coſt to get Champagne Wines, tho you were two hundred Leagues from Paris. Thoſe of Burgundy have loſt all their credit with the men of good taſte, and ſcarce do they preſerve a ſmall remainder of their old Reputation with the Citizens. There is no Province that affords excellent

Wines for all Seaſons, but Champagne. It furniſhes us with the Wines d'Ay, d'Avenet, and d'Auvilé till the Spring; Teſſy, Sillery, and Verſenai, for the reſt of the year.

If you ask me which of all theſe Wines I prefer, without being ſway'd by the faſhion of Taſtes, which falſe pretenders to delicacy have introduc'd, I will tell you, that the Wine d'Ay is the moſt natural of all Wines, the moſt wholeſom, the moſt free from all ſmell of the ſoil, and of the moſt exquiſite agreeableneſs, in regard of its Peach-taſte which is peculiar to it, and is in my opinion, the chief of all Taſtes and Flavours. LEO X. CHARLES V. FRANCIS I. and HENRY VIII. had each of them their Houſes in or near Ay, in order to the more curious getting their quantities of Wines. Amongſt the greateſt affairs of the world, in which thoſe Princes were more or leſs concern'd, it was not the leaſt of their cares to have the Wine d'Ay in their Cellars.

Be not too deſirous of Rarities, but be nice in your choice of what may be had with convenience. A good wholeſom natural Soop, which is neither too weak nor too ſtrong, is to be preferred for common Diet before all others, as well for the exquiſiteneſs of its Taſte, as for the advantage of its Uſe. Tender juicy Mutton, good ſucking Veal, white and curious barn-door Fowls, well fed, but not cramm'd; fat Quail taken in the Country; Pheaſant, Patridge, and Rabbet, all which have an agreeable natural ſavour in their Taſte, are the true Meats which may help to furniſh your table all the ſeaſons of the year. The Wood-hen is particularly to be eſteem'd for excellency, but is not to be ſought after where you or I are, by reaſon of its great rarity.

If an indiſpenſible neceſſity obliges you to dine with ſome of your Neighbours, whom either their money

money or their dexterity hath excuſed from ſerving in the Rear-ban, commend the Hare, the Stag, the Roe-buck, the Wild-boar, but eat none of them: let even Ducks and Teal have your good word too. Of all brown Meats the Snipe alone is to be commended, in favour of its taſte, tho it is ſomewhat prejudicial to Health.

Look upon all mixtures, and kitchin compoſitions, call'd Ragous, or Kick-ſhaws, to be little better than Poiſon. If you eat but little of them, they will do you but little hurt; if you eat a great deal, it's impoſſible but their Pepper, Vinegar, and Onions muſt ruin your taſte at laſt, and ſoon cauſe an alteration in your Health.

Sauces, if you make them your ſelf as ſimple and plain as is poſſible, can do no harm at all. Salt and Orange are the moſt general, and moſt natural Seaſoning. Fine Herbs are wholeſomer, and have ſomething in them more exquiſite than Spices; but they are not equally proper for every thing. One muſt uſe them with judgment in Meats where they are moſt agreeable; and diſtribute them with ſo much diſcretion, that they may improve the proper taſte of the Meat, without making their own diſcern'd.

Having thus diſcourſed to you of the quality of Wines, and the properties of Meats, 'tis neceſſary to come to the moſt proper counſel for the adapting of the Palate to the Body.

Let Nature incite you to eat and drink by a ſecret diſpoſition, which is lightly perceiv'd, and doth not preſs you to it thro' neceſſity. Without appetite, the moſt wholeſom Food is capable of hurting, and the moſt agreeable of diſguſting us. With hunger, the neceſſity of eating is a ſort of Evil which cauſes another after the Meal is over, by making us eat more than we ſhould. The Appetite (vulgarly call'd a *good Stomach*) prepares, if

I may ſo ſpeak, an exerciſe for our heat in the digeſtion: whereas greedineſs prepares labour and pain for it. The way to keep us always in a good temper, is to ſuffer neither too much emptineſs, nor too much repletion; that ſo Nature may never be tempted to fill it ſelf greedily with what it wants, nor impatient to diſcharge its load.

This is all that my Experience has been able to furniſh me with, in relation to Reading and good Cheer. Before I conclude, I will add a word or two concerning Love.

If you have a Miſtreſs at Paris, forget her as ſoon as ever you can; for ſhe will not fail to change, and it is good to be beforehand with the unfaithful. A Perſon amiable at Court, aims at being belov'd there, and where ſhe is loved, ſhe loves at laſt. The Ladies that preſerve a Paſſion for abſent perſons, raiſe but little in thoſe that ſee them; and the continuation of their Love to the abſent, is leſs an honour to their Conſtancy, than a ſcandal to their Beauty. Thus, Sir, whether your Miſtreſs loves another, or whether ſhe loves you ſtill, good ſenſe ought to make you leave her either as deceitful or as contemned. Nevertheleſs, in caſe you foreſee an end of your Diſgrace, you ought not to put an end to your Love; a ſhort abſence excites Paſſions, whereas a long one extinguiſhes them.

What way ſoever your mind turns, give not a new weight to it by too much Seriouſneſs. Diſgrace is but too heavy of it ſelf. Practiſe in your Exile, what PETRONIUS did at his Death: *Amove res ſerias quibus gravitas & conſtantiæ gloria peti ſolet; tibi, ut illi, levia carmina & faciles verſus.*

There are ſome, whoſe Misfortunes have render'd them devout by a certain Compaſſion, a ſecret Pity, which a man is apt to entertain for him-

ſelf, proper enough to diſpoſe men to a more religious Life. My Diſgraces never gave me this ſort of compaſſion. Nor has Nature made me ſenſible enough of my own misfortunes. The loſs of my Friends might be able to excite in me thoſe tender ſorrows and nice afflictions, out of which Devotion is form'd in proceſs of time. I would not adviſe any one to reſiſt that Devotion which ſprings from compaſſion, nor that which gives us an aſſurance. The one agreeably affects the Soul; the other ſettles the Mind in a ſweet repoſe: but all men, and particularly the unfortunate, ought to defend themſelves with care from a ſuperſtitious Devotion, which would mix its black melancholy vapours with thoſe of Diſgrace.

Of Antient and Modern

TRAGEDY.

THERE never were ſo many Rules to write a good Tragedy by; and yet ſo few good ones are now made, that the Players are oblig'd to revive and act all the old ones. I remember that the Abbé D'AUBIGNAC wrote one according to the Laws he had imperiouſly preſcrib'd for the Stage[1]. This Piece had no ſucceſs: notwithſtanding which he boaſted in all companies, that he was the only French Writer who had exactly follow'd the precepts of ARISTOTLE: where-

[1] *Francis Hedelin, Abbot d'Aubignac, publiſh'd in the year 1657, a Treatiſe intitled,* La Pratique du Theatre, *or* the Practiſe of the Stage.

upon the Prince of CONDE' ſaid wittily, *I am oblig'd to M.* D'AUBIGNAC *for having ſo exactly follow'd* ARISTOTLE's *Rules; but I will never forgive the Rules of* ARISTOTLE, *for having put M.* D'AUBIGNAC *upon writing ſo bad a Tragedy.*

It muſt be acknowledg'd, that ARISTOTLE's *Art of Poetry* is an excellent Work: but however, there's nothing ſo perfect in it, as to be the ſtanding rule of all Nations and all Ages. DESCARTES and GASSENDI have found out truths, that were unknown to ARISTOTLE. CORNEILLE has diſcover'd beauties for the Stage, of which ARISTOTLE was ignorant: and as our Philoſophers have obſerv'd errors in his *Phyſicks*, our Poets have ſpy'd out faults in his *Poeticks*, at leaſt with reſpect to us; conſidering what great change all things have undergone ſince his time.

The Gods and Goddeſſes amongſt the Antients brought about every thing that was great and extraordinary upon the Theatre, either by their Hatred or their Friendſhip; by their Revenge, or by their Protection; and among ſo many ſupernatural things, nothing appear'd fabulous to the People, who believ'd there paſs'd a familiar correſpondence between Gods and Men. Their Gods, generally ſpeaking, acted by human Paſſions: their men undertook nothing without the Counſel of their Gods; and executed nothing without their Aſſiſtance. Thus in this mixture of the Divinity and Humanity, there was nothing which was not credible.

But all theſe wonders are downright Romance to us, at this time of day. The Gods are wanting to us, and we are wanting to the Gods; and if, in imitation of the Antients, an Author would introduce Angels and Saints upon our Stage, the devouter ſort of people would be offended at it, and look on him as a profane perſon; and the Libertines

tines wou'd certainly think him weak. Our Preachers wou'd by no means ſuffer a confuſion of the Pulpit and Theatre; or that the People ſhould go and learn thoſe matters from the mouth of Comedians, which themſelves deliver in their Churches, with authority to the whole People.

Beſides this, it wou'd give too great an advantage to the Libertines, who might ridicule in a Comedy thoſe very things which they receive at Church, with a ſeeming ſubmiſſion; either out of reſpect to the Place where they are deliver'd, or to the Character of the Perſon that utters them.

But let us put the caſe, that our Doctors ſhould freely leave all holy matters to the liberty of the Stage: let us likewiſe take it for granted, that men of the leaſt devotion would hear them with as great an inclination to be edified, as Perſons of the profoundeſt reſignation; yet certain it is, that the ſoundeſt Doctrines, the moſt Chriſtian Actions, and the moſt uſeful Truths, wou'd produce a kind of Tragedy that wou'd pleaſe us the leaſt of any thing in the world.

The ſpirit of our Religion is directly oppoſite to that of Tragedy. The humility and patience of our Saints carry too direct an oppoſition to thoſe heroical Virtues, that are ſo neceſſary for the Theatre. What zeal, what force is there which Heaven does not beſtow upon NEARCHUS and POLIEUCTES[a]? and what is there wanting on the part of theſe new Chriſtians, to anſwer fully the end of theſe happy gifts? The paſſion and charms of a young lovely Bride, make not the leaſt impreſſion upon the mind of POLIEUCTES. The politick conſiderations of FELIX, as they leſs affect us, ſo they make a leſs impreſſion. Inſenſible both of Prayers

[a] *See Corneille's* POLIEUCTES.

and Menaces, POLIEUCTES has a greater desire to die for God, than other men have to live for themselves. Nevertheless, this very subject, which wou'd make one of the finest Sermons in the world, wou'd have made a wretched Tragedy, if the conversation of PAULINA and SEVERUS, heightned with other sentiments and other passions, had not preserved that reputation to the Author, which the Christian Virtues of our Martyrs had made him lose.

The Theatre loses all its agreeableness when it pretends to represent sacred things; and sacred things lose a great deal of the religious opinion that is due to them, by being represented upon the Theatre.

To say the truth, the Histories of the Old Testament are infinitely better suited to our Stage. MOSES, SAMPSON, and JOSHUAH, wou'd meet with much better success, than POLIEUCTES and NEARCHUS: for the wonders they wou'd work there, wou'd be a fitter subject for the Theatre. But I am apt to believe, that the Priests wou'd not fail to exclaim against the Profanation of these sacred Histories; with which they fill their ordinary Conversations, their Books, and their Sermons: and to speak soberly upon the point, the miraculous passage thro' the Red-Sea; the Sun stopt in his career by the Prayer of JOSHUAH; and whole Armies defeated by SAMPSON with the Jaw-bone of an Ass; all these Miracles, I say, wou'd not be credited in a Play, because we believe them in the Bible; but we should be rather apt to question them in the Bible, because we should believe nothing of them in a Play.

If what I have deliver'd is founded on good and solid Reasons, we ought to content our selves with things purely natural, but, at the same time, such as are extraordinary; and in our Heroes to chuse

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the principal Actions which we may believe poſſible as human; and which may cauſe admiration in us, as being rare and of an elevated character. In a word, we ſhould have nothing but what is great, yet ſtill let it be human: in the human, we muſt carefully avoid mediocrity; and fable, in that which is great.

I am by no means willing to compare the *Pharſalia* to the *Æneis*; I know the juſt difference of their value: but as for what purely regards elevation, POMPEY, CESAR, CATO, CURIO, and LABIENUS, have done more for LUCAN, than JUPITER, MERCURY, JUNO, VENUS, and all the train of the other Gods and Goddeſſes, have done for VIRGIL.

The ideas which LUCAN gives us of theſe great men, are truly greater, and affect us more ſenſibly than thoſe which VIRGIL gives us of his Deities. The latter has clothed his Gods with human infirmities, to adapt them to the capacity of Men: the other has raiſed his Heroes ſo, as to bring them into competition with the Gods themſelves:

Victrix cauſa Diis placuit, ſed victa Catoni.

In VIRGIL, the Gods are not ſo valuable as the Heroes: in LUCAN, the Heroes equal the Gods.

To give you my opinion freely, I believe that the Tragedy of the Antients might have ſuffer'd a happy loſs in the baniſhment of their Gods, their Oracles, and Soothſayers.

For it proceeded from theſe Gods, theſe Oracles, and theſe Diviners, that the Stage was ſway'd by a Spirit of Superſtition and Terror, capable of infecting mankind with a thouſand errors, and overwhelming them with more numerous miſchiefs. And if we conſider the uſual impreſſions which

Tragedy

Tragedy made at Athens in the minds of the Spectators, we may ſafely affirm, that PLATO was more in the right, who prohibited the uſe of them, than ARISTOTLE who recommended them: for as their Tragedies wholly conſiſted in exceſſive motions of Fear and Pity, was not this the direct way to make the Theatre a School of *Terror* and *Pity*, where People only learnt to be affrighted at all dangers, and to abandon themſelves to deſpair upon every misfortune.

It will be a hard matter to perſuade me, that a ſoul accuſtomed to be terrified for what regards another, has ſtrength enough to ſupport the misfortunes that concern it ſelf. This perhaps was the reaſon why the Athenians became ſo ſuſceptible of the impreſſions of fear; and that this ſpirit of terror, which the Theatre inſpired into them with ſo much art, became at laſt but too natural to their Armies.

At Sparta and Rome, where only examples of Valour and Conſtancy were publickly ſhewn, the People were no leſs brave and reſolute in Battle, than they were unſhaken and conſtant in the Calamities of the Republick. Ever ſince this art of fearing and lamenting was ſet up at Athens, all thoſe diſorderly Paſſions which they had as it were imbibed at their publick repreſentations, got footing in their Camps, and attended them in their Wars.

Thus a ſpirit of Superſtition occaſion'd the defeat of their Armies; as a ſpirit of Lamentation made them ſit down contented with bewailing their great Misfortunes, when they ought to have found out proper remedies for them. For how was it poſſible for them not to learn deſpair in this pitiful School of Commiſeration? The Perſons they uſually repreſented upon it, were examples of the

the greateſt Miſery, and ſubjects but of ordinary Virtues.

So great was their deſire to lament, that they repreſented fewer virtues than misfortunes; leſt a Soul rais'd to the admiration of Heroes, ſhould be leſs inclin'd to pity the Diſtreſſed. And in order to imprint theſe ſentiments of Affliction the deeper in their Spectators, they had always upon their Theatre a Chorus of Virgins, or of old Men, who furniſh'd them, upon every event, either with their Terrors, or their Tears.

ARISTOTLE was ſenſible enough what prejudice this might do the Athenians; but he thought he ſufficiently prevented it by eſtabliſhing a certain Purgation, which no one hitherto has underſtood; and which, in my opinion, he himſelf never fully comprehended. For, can any thing be ſo ridiculous, as to form a Science which will infallibly diſcompoſe our minds, only to ſet up another, which does not certainly pretend to cure us? Or to raiſe a perturbation in our Souls for no other end, than to endeavour afterwards to calm it, by obliging it to reflect upon the dejected condition it has been in?

Among a thouſand Perſons that are preſent at the Theatre, perhaps there may be ſix Philoſophers who are capable of recovering their former Tranquility, by the aſſiſtance of theſe prudent and uſeful Meditations: but the multitude will ſcarce make any ſuch judicious Reflections; and we may be almoſt aſſured, that what we ſee conſtantly repreſented on the Theatre, will not fail, at long run, to produce in us a habit of theſe unhappy motions.

Our Theatrical Repreſentations are not ſubject to the ſame inconveniencies, as thoſe of the Antients were; ſince our fear never goes ſo far as to raiſe this ſuperſtitious Terror, which produc'd ſuch ill effects upon Valour. Our Fear, generally ſpeaking,

is nothing elſe but an agreeable Uneaſineſs, which conſiſts in the ſuſpenſion of our Minds; 'tis a dear concern, which our Soul has for thoſe ſubjects that draw its affection to them.

We may almoſt ſay the ſame of Pity, as 'tis uſed on our Stage. We diveſt it of all its weakneſs; and leave it all that we call charitable and human. I love to ſee the Misfortune of ſome great unhappy perſon lamented; I am content, with all my heart, that he ſhould attract our Compaſſion, nay, ſometimes command our Tears: but then I would have theſe tender and generous Tears paid to his Misfortunes and Virtues together; and that this melancholy ſentiment of Pity be accompanied with vigorous Admiration, which ſhall ſtir up in our Souls a ſort of an amorous deſire to imitate him.

We were oblig'd to mingle ſomewhat of Love in the new Tragedy, the better to remove thoſe black Ideas which the antient Tragedy cauſed in us by Superſtition and Terror. And in truth, there is no Paſſion that more excites us to every thing that is noble and generous, than a virtuous Love. A man who may cowardly ſuffer himſelf to be inſulted by a contemptible Enemy, will yet defend what he loves, tho to the apparent hazard of his Life, againſt the attacks of the moſt valiant. The weakeſt and moſt fearful Creatures; thoſe Creatures that are naturally inclin'd to fear and to run away, will fiercely encounter what they dread moſt, to preſerve the object of their Love. Love has a certain heat which ſupplies the defect of Courage in thoſe who want it moſt! But to confeſs the truth, our Authors have made as ill an uſe of this noble Paſſion, as the Antients did of their Fear and Pity: for if we except eight or ten Plays, where its impulſes have been managed to great advantage; we have no Tragedies in which both Lovers and Love are not equally injur'd.

We

We have an affected Tenderneſs where we ought to place the nobleſt ſentiments. We beſtow a ſoftneſs on what ought to be moſt moving; and ſometimes, when we mean plainly to expreſs the graces of Nature, we fall into a vicious and mean Simplicity.

We imagine we make Kings and Emperors perfect Lovers, but in truth we make ridiculous Princes of them; and by the complaints and ſighs which we beſtow upon them, where they ought neither to complain nor ſigh, we repreſent them weak, both as Lovers and as Princes. Our great Heroes upon the Theatre, do often make love like Shepherds; and thus the innocence of a ſort of rural Paſſion, ſupplies with them the place of Glory and Valour.

If an Actreſs has the art to weep and bemoan herſelf after a moving lively manner, we give her our tears, at certain places which demand gravity; and becauſe ſhe pleaſes beſt when ſhe ſeems to be affected, ſhe ſhall put on grief all along, indifferently.

Sometimes we muſt have a plain, unartificial, ſometimes a tender, and ſometimes a melancholy whining Love, without regarding where that Simplicity, Tenderneſs, or Grief is requiſite: and the reaſon of it is plain; for as we muſt needs love every where, we look for diverſity in the manners, and ſeldom or never place it in the Paſſions.

I am in good hopes we ſhall one day find out the true uſe of this Paſſion, which is now become too common: that which ought to ſweeten cruel or calamitous accidents; that which ought to affect our very Souls, to animate our Courage, and raiſe our Spirits, will not certainly be always made the Subject of a little affected Tenderneſs, or of a weak Simplicity. Whenever this happens, we need not envy the Antients; and without paying too great a

reſpect

reſpect to Antiquity, or being too much prejudiced againſt the preſent Age, we ſhall not ſet up the Tragedies of SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES, as the only models for the Dramatick Compoſitions of our times.

However, I don't ſay that theſe Tragedies wanted any thing that was neceſſary to recommend them to the palate of the Athenians: but ſhould a man tranſlate even the *Oedipus*, the beſt performance of all Antiquity, into French, with the ſame ſpirit and force as we ſee it in the original, I dare be bold to affirm, that nothing in the world would appear to us more cruel, more oppoſite to the true ſentiments which mankind ought to have.

Our Age has, at leaſt, this advantage over theirs, that we are allow'd the liberty to hate Vice and love Virtue. As the Gods occaſion'd the greateſt crimes on the Theatre of the Antients, theſe crimes captivated the reſpect of the Spectators; and the People durſt not find fault with thoſe things which were really abominable. When they ſaw AGAMEMNON ſacrifice his own Daughter, and a Daughter too that was ſo tenderly belov'd by him, to appeaſe the indignation of the Gods, they only conſider'd this barbarous Sacrifice as a pious obedience, and the higheſt proof of a religious ſubmiſſion.

Now in that ſuperſtitious Age, if a man ſtill preſerv'd the common ſentiments of Humanity, he could not avoid murmuring at the cruelty of the Gods, like an impious perſon; and if he wou'd ſhow his Devotion to the Gods, he muſt needs be cruel and barbarous to his own Fellow-Creatures: he muſt, like AGAMEMNON, offer the greateſt violence both to Nature, and to his own Affection:

Tantum Relligio potuit ſuadere malorum,

ſays LUCRETIUS, upon the account of this barbarous Sacrifice.

Now-

Now-a-days we ſee men repreſented upon the Theatre without the interpoſition of the Gods; and this conduct is infinitely more uſeful both to the Publick, and to private Perſons: for in our Tragedies we neither introduce any Villain who is not deteſted, nor any Heroe, who does not cauſe himſelf to be admir'd. With us, few Crimes eſcape unpuniſhed, and few Virtues go off unrewarded. In ſhort, by the good Examples we publickly repreſent on the Theatre, by the agreeable Sentiments of Love and Admiration, which are diſcreetly interwoven with a rectified Fear and Pity, we are in a capacity of arriving to that perfection which HORACE deſires:

Omne tulit punctum, qui miſcuit utile dulci:

which can never be effected by the rules of the Antient Tragedy.

I ſhall conclude with a new and daring Thought of my own, and that is this: we ought in Tragedy, before all things whatever, to look after a Greatneſs of Soul well expreſs'd, which excites in us a tender Admiration. By this ſort of Admiration our Minds are ſenſibly raviſhed, our Courages elevated, and our Souls deeply affected.

ON THE CHARACTERS OF TRAGEDIES.

I Formerly deſign'd to write a Tragedy; but what I found the hardeſt matter of all, was, to defend my ſelf from a ſecret ſuggeſtion of Self-love, which will not eaſily ſuffer a man to lay aſide his own Temper, to take up that of another. I remember that I drew my own Character, without ever deſigning it; and that the Heroe dwindled inſenſibly into the little merit of ST. EVREMOND; whereas ST. EVREMOND ought to have raiſed himſelf to the great virtues of his Heroe. It fell out with my Paſſions as it did with my Character; for I expreſs'd my own motions while I endeavour'd to expreſs his. If I was amorouſly inclin'd, I turn'd every thing upon Love; if I found my ſelf inclined to Pity, I was not wanting to provide Misfortunes for it: I made the Actor ſpeak whatever I found within my own breaſt at home; and, in ſhort, repreſented my ſelf under the name of another. Let us not quarrel with the Heroes of our Tragedies, for being too liberal of their Tears, which they ſhould only ſhed upon proper occaſions; they are the Poet's own Tears, whoſe natural

tural temper being too compaſſionate, he is not able to reſiſt their Tenderneſs, which he has formed within himſelf. If he cou'd content himſelf only with entring into the ſentiments of his Heroes, we might expect that his Soul, which he only lends to Grief for a few moments, might obſerve ſome moderation: but when Authors take it to themſelves, they expreſs in reality, what they ought only to repreſent as probable. 'Tis a ſecret to know how to expreſs our ſelves juſtly in what relates to the Thoughts, but infinitely more in what concerns the Paſſions: for it is more difficult for the Soul to diſengage it ſelf from Paſſions, than for the Mind to divert its Thoughts. The Paſſions, 'tis true, ought to be lively, but never ſtrain'd; for if it were left to the Spectators to chuſe one of two extremes, they would much ſooner pitch on the defect than the exceſs. He that does not carry on the Paſſions far enough, does not content his Audience, and merits no applauſe; but he that puſhes them on too far, wounds the Imagination, and muſt expect to be exploded for his pains. The former gives us the pleaſure to ſupply his defects by our own invention; the latter gives us the trouble to retrench his ſuperfluities, which is always painful and tireſom. When the Heart, for inſtance, finds it ſelf touch'd ſo much as it ought to be, it endeavours to comfort it ſelf; and as of our own natures we return from our Paſſions to our Judgment, we judge not very favourably of Tenderneſs and Tears. Thoſe of the moſt unfortunate ought to be managed with great diſcretion; for the tendereſt Spectator ſoon dries up his: *cito areſcit lacryma in aliena miſeria* [1].

[1] Nihil eſt tam miſerabile, quàm ex beato miſer. Et hoc totum quidem moveat, ſi bona ex fortuna quis cadat; & à quo-

In truth, if we ſee a perſon too long afflicted upon the Theatre, we either laugh at his weakneſs, or the long pitying of a tedious Torment, which renders the misfortunes of another our own, offends Nature, which ought only to be touch'd. Every time that I go to hear our moſt moving Tragedies, the Tears of the Actors draw forth mine with a ſecret pleaſure, which I find in being mov'd: but if the Affliction continues, I am uneaſy, and impatiently expect ſome turn of the Scene to deliver me from theſe melancholy Impreſſions. I have frequently ſeen it happen in thoſe long diſcourſes of Tenderneſs, that towards the end, the Author gives us another idea, than that of a Lover whom he deſigns to repreſent. This Lover ſometimes commences a Philoſopher, and reaſons gravely in his Paſſion, or by way of Lecture explains to us, after what manner it is form'd. Sometimes the Spectator, who at firſt ſuffer'd his Imagination to range with the perſon repreſented, comes home to himſelf, and finds that 'tis not the Hero, but the Poet that ſpeaks, who in doleful ſtrain of elegy, wou'd needs have us weep at ſome feign'd misfortune.

An Author miſtakes, when he thinks to get my good opinion at this rate: he provokes my Laughter, when he pretends to poſſeſs me with Pity. But what is more ridiculous, even than this, is to hear a man declaim eloquently on his misfortunes. He that takes a great deal of pains in deſcribing them, ſaves me the trouble of condoling with him; 'tis Nature that ſuffers, and 'tis ſhe that ought to complain: ſhe ſometimes loves to ſpeak her private

rum caritate divellatur; quæ amittat, aut amiſerit; in quibus malis ſit, futuruſve ſit exprimatur breviter. CITO ENIM ARESCIT LACRYMA, PRÆSERTIM IN ALIENIS MALIS. *Cicer.* Part. Orat. Sect. 17.

vate thoughts, in order to gain relief by it; but not to expatiate eloquently, to ſhew her fine parts.

Neither have I any mighty opinion of the violence of that Paſſion, which is ingenious to expreſs it ſelf with great pomp and magnificence. The Soul, when it is ſenſibly touch'd, does not afford the mind an opportunity to think intenſely; much leſs to ramble and divert it ſelf in the variety of its conceptions. 'Tis upon this account that I can hardly bear with OVID's luxuriant fancy. He is witty in his Grief, and gives himſelf a world of trouble to ſhew his Wit, when we expect nothing but natural thoughts from him. VIRGIL deſervedly makes a juſt impreſſion upon us, in which we find nothing either languiſhing or ſtrain'd. As he leaves us nothing more to deſire in him; ſo on the other hand, he has nothing that offends us; and for this reaſon, our Souls behold with pleaſure, that amiable proportion which ſhines in all parts of his Work.

For my part, I am aſtoniſhed, that in our age, when all Dramatick Pieces turn upon Love, we ſhould be groſly ignorant of its nature and motions; altho Love acts differently according to the diverſity of temper, yet we may reduce all the effects of ſo general a Paſſion, to three principal heads, which are, to *Love*, to *Burn*, and to *Languiſh*.

To *Love*, ſimply conſider'd, is the firſt condition of our Soul, when ſhe moves by the impreſſion of ſome agreeable Object, whereupon is form'd a ſecret complacency in the perſon that loves; and this complacency becomes at laſt, a devoting one's ſelf to the perſon that is loved. To *Burn*, is a violent condition, ſubject to Inquietudes, to Pains, to Torments, ſometimes to Troubles, to Tranſports, to Deſpair; in a word, to every thing that agitates us, and diſturbs our repoſe. To *Languiſh*

is the fineſt movement of Love; 'tis the delicate effect of a pure Flame, which gently conſumes us; 'tis a dear and tender Malady, which makes us hate all thoughts of a cure. We entertain it ſecretly in the bottom of our Hearts, and if it comes to diſcover it ſelf, our Eyes, our Silence, a Sigh that eſcapes us, a Tear that drops in ſpite of us, expreſs it infinitely better, than all the eloquence of the moſt elaborate Diſcourſe. As for thoſe long converſations of Tenderneſs, thoſe Sighs we hear inceſſantly, and thoſe Tears that are ſhed every moment, they may be aſcrib'd to ſome other cauſe; for, in my opinon, they are not ſo much the effects of Love, as the folly of the Lover. I have a greater reſpect for that Paſſion than to load it with any ſcandal which does not belong to it. A few Tears are ſufficient for a Lover to expreſs his Love by: when they are immoderate or unſeaſonable, they rather ſhew his Infirmity than his Paſſion. I dare venture to ſay, that a Lady who might have ſome compaſſion for her Lover, when ſhe ſees him diſcreetly and reſpectfully expreſſing the Inquietudes ſhe gives him, would laugh at him for a chicken-hearted milk-ſop, if he whin'd and ſobb'd eternally before her.

I have obſerved, that CERVANTES always eſteems in his Cavaliers, a probable Merit, but he never fails to laſh, in good earneſt, their fabulous Combats, and their ridiculous Penances. Upon this laſt conſideration, he prefers DON GALAOR, to the honeſt AMADIS DE GAULE, *Porque tenia muy accommodada condicion para todo; que no era Cavallero melindroſo, ni tan lloron como ſu hermano* *.

One

* *Becauſe he was a man who wou'd diſpenſe with any thing, neither was he ſo finical, nor ſuch a whining Lover as his Brother.* CERVANTES *in his* Don Quixot, *Vol.* I. *Chap.* 12.

One great fault of Authors in their Tragedies, is, that they employ one Paſſion for another: as for inſtance, they make it to be Grief, where it ought only to be Tenderneſs; and on the contrary, they introduce Deſpair, when it ſhould be Grief. QUINAUT, in his Tragedies, is frequently tender, where he ought to grieve in good earneſt. In the *Titus* of RACINE, you find Deſpair, where there is ſcarce occaſion for bare Grief. Hiſtory informs us, that TITUS, who was a cautious prudent Prince, ſent back BERENICE to Judea, that he might not give the leaſt offence to the people of Rome; but the Poet makes a deſperate Lover of him, who is reſolved to kill himſelf, rather than conſent to this ſeparation.

CORNEILLE is equally faulty in his *Titus*[3]. He repreſents him as ready to leave Rome, and throw up the Empire, to go and make love in Judea. In this he treſpaſſes directly againſt Truth and Probability, deſtroying the character both of the private Man and the Emperor, only to aſcribe every thing to a Paſſion that was extinguiſh'd. In ſhort, he makes this Prince perfectly beſotted on BERENICE, whereas he parted from her either as a wiſe Man, or a diſguſted Lover. I own, indeed, that there are certain occaſions, wherein good Senſe, and even Reaſon it ſelf, allows us Paſſion, and in thoſe caſes Paſſion ought to carry it above the Character. HORACE would have us repreſent ACHILLES active, cholerick, inexorable, one that look'd upon himſelf ſubject to no Laws, and owning in his undertakings no other right but what his Sword gave him[4]; but then we are to conſider,

[3] *In his* Heroical Comedy, *Entitled*, TITUS AND BERENICE.

[4] Aut famam ſequere, aut ſibi convenientia finge
Scriptor. Honoratum ſi fortè reponis Achillem;

der, that he is only to be painted ſo in his ordinary temper. This is the Character which HOMER gives him, when he contends for his fair Captive with AGAMEMNON: nevertheleſs, neither HOMER nor HORACE would have us extinguiſh all humanity in ACHILLES; and EURIPIDES was certainly in the wrong to give him ſo little love for IPHIGENIA, juſt upon the point when ſhe was going to be ſacrificed [5]. The Prieſt ſeem'd to be touch'd with Compaſſion, and the Lover appear'd as it were inſenſible. If he ſhews Anger, it reſults from his temper, not from his affection for IPHIGENIA. It will be granted me, on all hands, that Humanity demanded Pity; that Nature, and even good Manners requir'd Tenderneſs; and all perſons of a true taſte will blame this Poet, for laying too great a ſtreſs upon the Character of his Hero, when he ought to have made ſome allowances to Paſſion. But when a Paſſion is generally known, we ought to aſcribe as little as we can to the Character of the perſon.

For inſtance, if you were to deſcribe MARK ANTHONY, after he had abandon'd himſelf to his love, you ought not to paint him with thoſe ſhining qualities which nature beſtow'd upon him. ANTHONY beſotted with CLEOPATRA, is not ANTHONY the friend of CESAR. Of a brave, bold, active man, he is become a weak, effeminate, lazy, whining wretch. Of a man who had in no reſpect been wanting, either to his Intereſt, or to his Party; we find him wanting to himſelf, and utterly undone by himſelf.

HORACE,

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,
Jura neget ſibi data, nihil non arroget armis.
Hor. *de Art. Poet.* ℣. 119—122.

[5] *This is one of Grotius's Thoughts.*

HORACE, whom I mention'd a little above, has laid down the Character of old Age, which he adviſes us carefully to obſerve. If we have an Old Man to repreſent, he would have us draw him heaping up riches, yet denying himſelf the uſe of them, cold, timorous, peeviſh, melancholy, diſſatisfied with the preſent times, and a zealous admirer of what he ſaw when he was a young fellow [6]. However, if we are to introduce an old man who is paſſionately in Love, we muſt not give him either coldneſs, or fear, or lazineſs, or melancholy: we muſt make him liberal inſtead of covetous, and complaiſant inſtead of moroſe or ſurly: he muſt find fault with all the Beauties he has ſeen, and only admire that which enſlaves him at preſent; he muſt do every thing for his Miſtreſs, and govern himſelf by no other will but hers, as thinking to obtain by his ſubmiſſion, whatever he loſes by the diſadvantage of his Age:

He thinks the low Submiſſion by him ſhown,
Will for his Age and Impotence atone [7].

Such an one was in effect, and as ſuch, has been painted by CORNEILLE, the old and unfortunate SYPHAX. Before he was charm'd by SOPHONISBA, he held the Ballance between the Carthaginians and the Romans: no ſooner did he become a Lover in his old days, but he loſt his

[6] Multa ſenem circumveniunt incommoda; vel quòd
Quærit, & inventis miſer abſtinet, ac timet uti;
Vel quòd res omnes timidè, gelidéque miniſtrat,
Dilator, ſpe longus, iners, aviduſque futuri,
Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti
Se puero, cenſor, caſtigatorque minorum.
Hor. *de Art. Poet.* ℣. 169—174.

[7] *Corneille's* SOPHONISBA.

Dominions, and himſelf together, for reſigning himſelf to a Woman's will.

When I uſe the word Paſſion, 'tis Love I mean: for all the other paſſions ſerve to form the Character inſtead of deſtroying it. To be naturally gay, melancholy, cholerick, and fearful, is to have Humours, Qualities and Affections that compoſe a Character: to be very much in love, is to take up a Paſſion which not only deſtroys the qualities of a Character, but likewiſe commands the motions of other qualities. 'Tis certain, that they who truly love, are never hurried to any other paſſions, but according as they humour and ſtrike in with their love. If they have any indignation againſt a Lover, love both provokes and pacifies them; they intend hatred, and can't ceaſe loving; Love excuſes Ingratitude, and juſtifies Infidelity. The very torments of a true paſſion are Pleaſures; we feel the Pains of it only when it is paſt, juſt as after the Delirium of a Fever we feel the pain occaſion'd by it. In loving well, we are never miſerable, but we think our ſelves to be ſo, when we ceaſe to love.

A beauteous ſhe, with all her pow'r,
Can't make us wretched for an hour:
Tho we muſt never hope for the poſſeſſing,
Her charms are favours, and her ſight's a bleſſing.

To an Author who ask'd my Opinion of a Play, where the Heroine does nothing but lament her ſelf.

THE Princeſs you make the Heroine of your Play, would have pleas'd me well enough, had you manag'd her Tears with more frugality: but you make her ſhed them ſo prodigally, that when the Audience come to themſelves, this profuſion of Tears, cannot but make the perſon whom you repreſent leſs affecting; and thoſe that behold the Repreſentation leſs ſenſible. CORNEILLE has had the misfortune, to diſguſt the generality of his ſpectators in his latter days; becauſe he muſt needs diſcover that which is moſt hidden in our Hearts; that which is moſt exquiſite in the Paſſions; and moſt delicate in the Thoughts. After he had, as it were, worn out the ordinary Paſſions with which we are agitated, he was in hopes of gaining a new reputation, if he touch'd our moſt conceal'd Tenderneſſes, our niceſt Jealouſies, and our moſt ſecret Griefs: but this ſtudied penetration, being too delicate for great Aſſemblies, ſo precious and painful a diſcovery has made him loſe ſome eſteem in the world, whereas it ought to have procured him new applauſe.

'Tis certain, that no man underſtood Nature better than CORNEILLE: but he has deſcribed it differently, according to the different periods of his life. When he was young, he contented himſelf with deſcribing its motions: when he was old, he was

was for discovering its most secret springs. Formerly, he ascrib'd every thing to the Sentiment; at present, Penetration does every thing with him: now, he opens the Heart, and its most conceal'd recesses; whereas he formerly represented it with all its anxieties and agitations. Other Authors have succeeded better in complying with the present humour of the Age, which loves nothing but Grief and Tenderness upon the Theatre: but I am afraid your Tragedy will contribute to rectify the depraved palate of the Town, and that the Audience will nauseate the insupportable excess of a Passion, which has the good fortune at present to please.

I own that nothing is so moving, as the lively representation of a beautiful Person in distress; 'tis a new sort of a Charm, that unites every thing that is tender within us, by impressions of Love and Pity mingled together. But if the fair Lady continues to bewail her misfortunes too long, that which at first affected us, makes us sad; and as we are soon weary of comforting one who takes a pleasure in whining and complaining, we leave her as a troublesome creature, in the hands of old Women and Relations, who know how to manage one in this sad condition, by the receiv'd rules of condoling.

A Writer who thorowly understands the Passions, will never exhaust his stock of Grief, because this profusion must naturally create an indolence in the Spectators, which will infallibly end in a general dislike. The first Tears are natural to the Passion which we express; they have their source in the heart, and convey grief from an afflicted to a tender heart. The latter are purely owing to the Poet's wit; Art has produced them, and therefore Nature will not own them. Affliction ought to have something that is moving, and the end of Affliction something that is animated, in order to make

make a new impreſſion upon us. 'Tis likewiſe requiſite that it terminate by good Fortune, which finiſhes misfortunes by Joy, or by a great Virtue, which draws our Admiration. Sometimes it ends in Death, and from thence ariſes in our ſouls a Commiſeration, proper and natural to Tragedy: but this never ought to be after long Lamentations, which gives us more diſguſt for the weakneſs of the perſon repreſented, than compaſſion for his misfortunes.

I cannot endure to ſee a dying Perſon upon the Stage, who is more lamented by him that dies, than by the Spectators that ſee him die. I love great Griefs, attended with few Complaints, but deep Concern: I love a Deſpair which does not waſte it ſelf in words, but where Nature is overcome, and ſinks under the violence of the Paſſion. Long tedious diſcourſes rather ſhew our deſire of life, than our reſolutions to die; to ſpeak much upon theſe occaſions, is to languiſh in Deſpair, and to loſe all the merit of one's grief:

O Silvia, tu ſe' morta,

and to ſwoon away like AMINTA[1];

I don't weep, Madam, but I die[2];

and to expire like EURYDICE.

Our misfortunes are certainly alleviated by tears and lamenting: and the greateſt pain in the world, when it begins to abate, increaſes our deſires of living, in proportion as it leſſens. It falls out with our reaſoning, as it does with our tears: if we reaſon never ſo little in our afflictions, reaſon will rather adviſe

[1] AMINTA *of Taſſo, Act.* III. *Scene* II.
[2] SURENA, *one of Corneille's Tragedies, Act.* V. *Sc.* V.

adviſe us to bear them, than to die. Let us relieve on the Theatre thoſe Perſons whom we repreſent lamenting and grieving ſo exceſſively: let us beſtow more Calamities than Tears and long Diſcourſes, on thoſe who we deſign ſhould die there.

A LETTER

TO

THE COUNT DE LIONNE.

AS irkſom and heavy as my Diſgraces are, yet I find ſome alleviation, when I find a perſon of ſo much honour as your ſelf, who has the tenderneſs to pity them, and the generoſity to endeavour to put an end to them. I am infinitely oblig'd to Madam * * * for her kindneſs, and to you for your zealous endeavours: but I ſhould be glad that, for the future, no body would ſtir up Count DE LAUZUN to ſerve me; for I am ſure he'll do, of his own accord, all that ſhall lie in his power for me, without doing himſelf hurt; and I ſhould be very ſorry to draw upon him the leaſt mortification. He ought to entertain his Maſter with nothing but what's agreeable, and hear nothing from him, but what brings him ſome ſatisfaction. For, when a Maſter has once begun to refuſe, he eaſily gets a habit of not granting what's aſk'd of him. I have heard a great Courtier ſay, that *a man ought very carefully to avoid the firſt repulſe*;

pulſe; and I ſhould be very ſorry to have occaſion'd one, to a perſon I honour ſo highly, as I do Count LAUZUN.

Not but that I lie under a ſort of neceſſity of going to France, for two Months, unleſs I will reſolve to loſe the little I have there, and all that makes me ſubſiſt in foreign Countries. There is, as I take it, about forty thouſand Livres ſtill due to me, of which I can get nothing: however, I fear more than want the Relief of Nature, which might put an end to the ill treatments I receive from Fortune. I am tormented with deviliſh Vapours; but as ſoon as they are over, I am as merry as ever. In one hour, all that is ſad, and all that is pleaſant, preſents it ſelf, by turns, to my imagination: ſo that I am more ſenſibly affected with the effects of Humour, than by the power of Reaſon. I ſhould eaſily fall to moralizing; which is the inclination of all the unfortunate, whoſe imagination is generally taken up either with melancholy, or, at leaſt, ſerious thoughts. As I fear the ridicule that attends Gravity, I ſtop ſhort, to tell you only, Sir, that no man is more abſolutely yours, *&c.*

I beſeech you, when occaſion offers, to aſſure Madam .* * * of my moſt humble acknowledgments, for all her kindneſſes.

Since I had the honour to write to you laſt, I have paſs'd my tedious hours in trifles. I have made ſome *Obſervations on our Hiſtorians*; *on Tragedy, and on the Spaniſh, French, Italian, and Engliſh Comedy*; *on Operas*, &c. But theſe were only particular Obſervations, without much Deſign or Regularity, tho grounded on the different Genius of thoſe reſpective Nations. I have loſt part of them, and the reſt is ſtill in confuſion: however, ſuch as it is, I ſhall tranſmit it to you. You will infinitely oblige me to ſend me all that's new, provided it be curious, and ſcarce.

A DISCOURSE UPON THE FRENCH HISTORIANS.

IT muſt be acknowledg'd, that the greateſt part of our *Hiſtorians*, are Men of an indifferent merit; and were it not for the natural deſire of knowing what has happen'd in one's own Country, I can't imagine how any perſon, that has been converſant in antient Hiſtory, could ever bear the tedioufneſs of ours. 'Tis certainly very ſurprizing, that in a Monarchy, where there have been ſo many memorable Wars, and ſo many ſignal Revolutions; that amongſt a People that wants neither Courage to perform things, nor the Vanity to talk of them, there ſhould not riſe up one Hiſtorian, who anſwers either the dignity of the Subject, or our own inclination.

I was formerly of opinion, that we ought to charge this defect on our Language; but when I afterwards conſider'd, that the beauty of the French, in our Tranſlations, almoſt equall'd that of the Greek and Latin, in the Originals, I cou'd not help thinking with my ſelf, that the meanneſs of our Genius falls vaſtly ſhort of the Majeſty of Hiſtory. Beſides, altho we had among us ſome perſons of an elevated mind and great Abilities, yet there are

too many things neceſſary to the Compoſition of a juſt Hiſtory, to be met with in one and the ſame Perſon. We might find perhaps a Style pure and elevated enough in ſome of our Authors, who by reaſon of their living at a diſtance from the Court and Buſineſs, would run into general Maxims, and Common-places, which reliſh more of the Politicks of Antiquity, than our own. On the other hand, our Men of Buſineſs and Experience, are well acquainted, 'tis true, with our Intereſts; but they lie under the diſadvantage of being uſed to an Epiſtolary Style, which as it is proper for Negotiations, ſo it does not come up to the dignity of Hiſtory. 'Tis likewiſe a uſual thing with them, to ſpeak improperly of War; unleſs their fortune led them formerly to a Camp, or they lived in the confidence and familiarity of great men, who had the management of military Affairs. This is a conſiderable defect in GROTIUS, who after he has penetrated into the moſt ſecret cauſes of the War, the nature of the Government of the Spaniards, and the diſpoſition of the People of Flanders; who, after he has enter'd into the true Genius of Nations; form'd a juſt Character of Societies, and principal Perſons; has ſo well explain'd the different ſtate of Religion; and trac'd up things to Originals, unknown to Cardinal BENTIVOGLIO, and STRADA, cannot maintain the admiration which he cauſed in us, ſo ſoon as he begins to open the ſcene of War; ſpeaks of the motions of Armies, deſcribes Sieges, and relates Battles.

We have among us Perſons of Quality of an extraordinary merit, who having paſs'd thro' great Employments, by the help of good natural parts, and ſome acquir'd knowledge, are equally capable of acting, and ſpeaking well; but, generally, they either want a Genius, or have not the art of writing: beſides that, being wholly taken up with the Court,

Court, and the function of their Offices, they don't endeavour to inſtruct themſelves in the forms of the Government, and orders of the Kingdom. They would be apt to imagine, that they debaſed themſelves, and took the buſineſs of the Gentlemen of the Long Robe upon them, againſt the dignity of their Profeſſion, if they ſhould apply themſelves to the knowledge of our principal Laws. Tho without theſe lights, I am aſſur'd it is in a manner impoſſible to make a good Hiſtory, filled as it ought to be, with ſound and judicious Inſtructions.

My Lord BACON often complains, that Hiſtorians take pleaſure in enlarging on foreign Affairs, and ſeem purpoſely to avoid thoſe Statutes to which the publick Tranquillity is owing, as if this would make the Narration languiſh: and that indulging themſelves with pleaſure in the recital of thoſe Calamities which war occaſions, they don't, without a ſenſible diſtaſte, treat of the good Laws, which eſtabliſh the happineſs of civil Society. His complaints appear to me the better grounded, becauſe there is not one Hiſtory among the Romans, where we cannot diſcover the inſide of the Republick, by its Laws, as well as the outſide by its Conqueſts. You find in LIVY, ſometimes the repealing of old Laws, and ſometimes the ſanction of new ones; in him you ſee every thing that depends on Religion, and relates to Ceremonies. The Conſpiracy of CATILINE in SALLUST, is all along fill'd with matters relating to the Conſtitution of the Republick; and that ingenious and artful ſpeech of CESAR, doth it not wholly run upon the *Portian* Law; upon the juſt conſiderations their Anceſtors had, to lay aſide the ancient rigour in the puniſhment of Citizens; and upon the dangerous conſequences that would follow, if ſo wiſe an Ordinance ſhould be violated?

The ſame CESAR, in his *Commentaries*, never loſes any occaſion, to ſpeak of the Manners, Cuſtoms, and Religion of the Gauls. TACITUS is, perhaps, even to a fault, full of Accuſations, Defences, Laws, and Judgments. QUINTUS CURTIUS, in a Hiſtory made rather to pleaſe, than to inſtruct, puts the Laws of the Macedonians into ALEXANDER's mouth, to anſwer the reproaches of HERMOLAUS, who had conſpired againſt his life. This ALEXANDER, that ſeems to have known no other law than his own will, while he was conquering the World; this very ALEXANDER, doth not diſdain to ſupport himſelf by the authority of the Laws, for having order'd a young Boy to be whipt, even when he was maſter of the Univerſe.

As there is no Nation but what deſires to ſecure it ſelf from foreign violences, when it is weak, or to render its condition more glorious by Conqueſts, when it is powerful; as there is none, but ought to ſecure its repoſe by the conſtitution of a good Government, and the tranquillity of Conſcience by the impreſſions of Religion: ſo there is no Hiſtorian but ought to be inſtructed in all theſe different concerns, when he undertakes to write Hiſtory; but ought to ſhew, what it is that renders Men unhappy, to the end it may be avoided, or what makes their happineſs, that it may be purſued. Thus 'tis impoſſible for a man to write a good Hiſtory of France, whatever Wars he is to deſcribe, without ſhewing the Conſtitution of the Kingdom, the Difference of Religion, and the Immunities of the Gallican Church.

It would be ridiculous to undertake to write that of England, without knowing the affairs of the Parliament, and being well inſtructed in the different Religions of that Kingdom. No leſs abſurd would it be to attempt that of Spain, without know-

ing exactly the various forms of its Councils, and the myſtery of its Inquiſition, as well as the ſecret of its foreign Intereſts, and the motives and ſucceſſes of its Wars.

But, in truth, theſe diverſities of Laws, Religion, Politicks, and War, ought to be ingeniouſly mingled, and very diſcreetly managed: for a man that wou'd often affect to ſpeak of the Conſtitution and Laws of a State, would rather ſhew us the Legiſlator, or Lawyer, than the Hiſtorian. To treat of every point of Religion with a nice curioſity, would be making Lectures of Divinity; and we ſhould ſcarce be able to endure this in the Hiſtory of FRA PAOLO [1], did we not know that his long tireſome Controverſies between the Doctors, were merely occaſion'd by the neceſſity of his ſubject.

Altho the deſcriptions of Wars ſeem to bear the firſt place in Hiſtory, yet a man would paſs for a ſort of a tedious Story-teller, to heap up accidents upon accidents, without any variety of matter: in ſhort, he would manage a true ſubject as aukwardly, as the contrivers of old Romances did their feign'd Combats and fabulous Adventures.

The Latin Hiſtorians knew how to blend admirably well all theſe different parts of Knowledge I have mention'd: for the Hiſtory of the Romans ought to bear ſome reſemblance with their Lives, which were divided between the different functions of ſeveral Profeſſions. Indeed, there were hardly any Perſons of eminence at Rome, but who paſſed thro' the Dignities of the Prieſthood; were Members of the Senate; and call'd out from thence to the command of Armies. But now every Profeſſion takes up a man entirely. The greateſt Virtue of the Clergy, is to apply themſelves wholly to Eccleſiaſtical affairs; and thoſe whoſe Ambition hath puſh'd

[1] *The Hiſtory of the Council of Trent.*

puſh'd them to the management of ſecular Buſineſs-have met with a thouſand reproaches, for corrupting the ſanctity of that life they were deſtin'd to. The Lawyers are ridicul'd ſo ſoon as they ſtep out of their profeſſion; and a Soldier is, for the moſt part, aſham'd, to know any thing beyond his buſineſs.

'Tis certain, however, that the different applications of the Ancients, formed a Capacity much more extenſive; the ſame perſons underſtanding how to employ the forces of the Republick, and to keep the People within their Duty, by the awe of Religion, and the authority of the Laws. It was a great advantage to the Magiſtrates, that they were maſters of the ſtrongeſt impreſſions that can be made upon our minds; and that they had the management of all thoſe Sentiments, by which we are diſpos'd to docility, or conſtrain'd to obedience. Nor was it leſs beneficial to their Generals, that they were inſtructed in the ſecrets of their Religion, to enable them to inſpire their own Notions, and make them to be receiv'd with the ſame reſpect, as if they had been truly dictated by the Gods; to have the art of turning all things into Preſages of good or ill fortune; and to know ſeaſonably the critical time, when to fill the Soldiers with confidence or fear. But beſides this, there accrued another advantage to the Republick; which was, that by this means the Magiſtrates made themſelves perfectly known: for it was impoſſible, that in theſe different functions, the true natural temper of a man, tho it lay never ſo deep, ſhould equally conceal it ſelf thro'out; and that his good or ill qualities ſhould not, at length, be diſcern'd. In men of a narrow genius, whom nature has reſtrained to a certain talent, they diſcover'd, that a ſoft and peaceable temper, which is fit enough for reli-

gious ſervices, had not ſometimes conſtancy enough to maintain the Law with vigour.

Sometimes it was obſerv'd, that a Senator was proof againſt Bribery in Law-trials, who had neither the activity nor vigilance of a good Commander. Such a man was a great Warrior, as MARIUS, who had no capacity for what related to Religion and Buſineſs. To ſpeak the truth, we ſometimes meet with an univerſal Capacity, and a conſummate Virtue amongſt them, which render'd ſome men uſeful to the Publick, upon all occaſions whatever: but then there were alſo amongſt them men of leſs extenſive parts, who were only employ'd in thoſe Affairs for which they were fit.

This was viſibly ſeen in the Conſulſhip of CICERO, and ANTONIUS, wherein the firſt was order'd to watch for the ſafety of the Republick, which was his proper talent; while the other was ſent to aſſemble Troops, in conjunction with PETREIUS, to fight CATILINE.

If we reflect upon what I have ſaid, we ſhall not be ſurpriz'd to find excellent Hiſtorians amongſt a People, where thoſe that writ Hiſtory were moſt frequently very conſiderable perſons, who wanted neither Genius, nor the Art of writing well; and who poſſeſſed, in an equal meaſure, a profound knowledge of the Affairs of Religion, War, and Men. 'Tis certain, the Antients had a great advantage over us, in knowing the genius of Men, by the different trials thro' which they were obliged to paſs, before they came to the adminiſtration of the Commonwealth; neither were they wanting to paint and deſcribe them to the life; for whoever will examine their Characters, with a little curioſity and ſkill, will diſcover a particular ſtudy in all this, and an Art deeply laid.

In

In effect, you will find that they put together, as it were, oppoſite qualities, which a man would never imagine, at firſt ſight, to find in one and the ſame perſon: *animus audax, ſubdolus.* You ſee them make a difference in certain qualities, which appear to be abſolutely the ſame, and which one cannot diſcover without a great nicety of diſcernment: *ſubdolus, varius, cujuſlibet rei ſimulator, ac diſſimulator* [2].

There is another diverſity in the Characters of the Antients, more curious, and yet is leſs known to us, *viz.* a certain difference, wherewith each Vice, or Virtue is mark'd, by the particular impreſſion it makes in the minds where it is. For example, the Courage of ALCIBIADES hath ſomething ſingular in it, to diſtinguiſh it from that of EPAMINONDAS, altho both of them deſpis'd death alike. The Integrity of CATO, is different from that of CATULUS; the Daringneſs of CATILINE, is not the ſame with that of ANTHONY; the Ambition of SYLLA, and that of CESAR, have not a perfect reſemblance: for which reaſon, when the Antients form the Characters of their Great Men, they form at the ſame time the Character of the Qualities they aſſign to them, that they may appear not only ambitious and daring, or moderate and prudent; but that we may know more particularly, what ſort of Ambition and Courage, or Moderation and Prudence they had.

SALLUST [3] deſcribes CATILINE as a perſon of a wicked diſpoſition; and the wickedneſs of his temper is immediately expreſſed: *ſed ingenio malo, pravoque.* The particular kind of his Ambition is diſtinguiſh'd by the irregularity of his Morals; and

[2] *Salluſt in the Character of Catiline.*

[3] *See the* Obſervations on Salluſt, and Tacitus, *Vol.* I. *p.* 224.

that Irregularity is ſhewn by the Character of his Mind, whoſe imaginations were too vaſt, and too high: *vaſtus animus immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta ſemper cupiebat.* He had a Temper wicked enough to undertake any thing againſt the Laws, and too vaſt a Soul to fix himſelf to deſigns proportion'd to the means, by which they uſe to ſucceed.

The bold Spirit of a voluptuous and lewd Woman, ſuch as SEMPRONIA was, might indeed make one believe, that her Boldneſs would undertake any thing, to carry on her Amours: but as this ſort of Daringneſs is not very proper for dangers, to which one is expoſed in a Conſpiracy, SALLUST preſently explains what ſhe was capable of doing, by telling us what ſhe had done before: *quæ multa ſæpe virilis audaciæ facinora commiſerat.* Here is the Species of her Daringneſs expreſs'd. He makes her dance and ſing, not with the Faſhions, Geſtures, and Motions, which the ſinging and dancing Women at Rome uſed, but with more art and curioſity than became a virtuous woman: *pſallere, ſaltare elegantius, quam neceſſe eſt probæ.* When he aſcribes Wit to her, he tells us at the ſame time, wherein the merit of it conſiſted: *verùm, ingenium ejus haud abſurdum; poſſe verſus facere, jocos movere, ſermone uti, vel modeſto, vel molli, vel procaci.*

You will find by the Character of SYLLA, that his Temper happily ſuited with his Deſigns. The Republick, at that time, being divided into Factions, thoſe that aſpired to Power had no nearer concern than to acquire friends; and SYLLA took no greater pleaſure than to get them. Liberality is the beſt way to gain Affection: and SYLLA knew how to part with every thing. Amongſt the things we beſtow, nothing enſlaves men more, and ſecures ſo much their Service to us, as the Money we give them: and in this the Liberality of SYLLA was parti-

cularly ſeen: *rerum omnium, pecuniæ maximè, largitor*[4] He was liberal in his own nature; liberal of his money, out of intereſt. His Leiſure was voluptuous; but an Hiſtorian had given us a wrong idea of this great man, had he deſcrib'd him with ſenſuality or lazineſs: this obliges SALLUST to repreſent it as the Pleaſure of a Gentleman, ſubordinate to glory, which never retards the diſpatch of buſineſs; leſt we ſhould miſtake it for a ſoftneſs, in which the effeminate generally languiſh: *cupidus voluptatum, gloriæ cupidior; otio luxurioſo eſſe, tamen ab negotiis nunquam voluptas remorata.* He was the happieſt man in the world, before the Civil War, but this happineſs was not the pure effect of chance; and his Fortune, as great as it always was, ever came ſhort of his Induſtry: *atque illi, feliciſſumo omnium ante civilem victoriam, nunquam ſuper induſtriam fortuna fuit.*

When TACITUS deſcribes PETRONIUS to us, he diſtinguiſhes the Qualities he beſtows upon him in the like manner: he makes him conſume his wealth, not like a profuſe ſpendthrift in Debauchery, but like a delicate perſon, in a polite and refin'd Luxury. The Contempt of Death, which he aſcribes to him, hath nothing common with that, which the other Romans had. It is not the ſteddy Gravity of THRASEAS, who read a Lecture to the Meſſenger, that brought to him the Death-warrant: it is not the forc'd Conſtancy of SENECA, who is oblig'd to encourage himſelf, by the remembrance of his own Precepts and Diſcourſes: it is not that affected Bravery, upon which HELVIDIUS valued himſelf: in ſhort it is not a reſolution grounded upon the opinions of Philoſophers; 'tis a ſoft and careleſs Indifference, which left in his Soul no

[4] *Salluſt's words are:* multarum rerum ac maxume pecuniæ largitor.

room for the diſmal thoughts of Death; it is a continuation of the ordinary courſe of his Life to the laſt moment [1].

But if the Ancients ſhew'd ſo great a niceneſs in marking theſe Differences, they diſcover no leſs art in the Stile of their Characters, to oblige us to take the more notice of them. In their Narrations they engage us to follow them by the inſenſible charms of an agreeable and natural tale. They hurry us along in their Orations, by the vehemence of their diſcourſe, leſt if we continued calm and unmoved, it might make us diſcover what a want of good Senſe there is, amidſt all this Pomp of Eloquence; and afford us leiſure ſecretly to reſolve not to be perſuaded by it. Sometimes, at a Conſultation, they bring reaſons upon reaſons, to determine the unreſolved to that Party they would have them embrace: but in Characters where we ſhould diſcern Vices and Virtues; where we ſhould ſort the Differences which meet in one and the ſame man; where we ſhould not only diſtinguiſh the different Qualities, but the Differences likewiſe by which each Quality is characteriz'd; we ought not to uſe a warm declamatory Style, nor urge arguments one upon the neck of another, either to hurry away, or captivate the underſtanding. On the contrary, we ought to ſtand upon our guard, and ſecure our ſelves from whatever appears to have a deſign upon our Reaſon; which we muſt preſerve free and unbyaſs'd: we ought likewiſe diligently to ſcan every word in an abrupt Style, when the words will admit of a various conſtruction, leſt we ſhould loſe our ſelves in too general Conſiderations. In order to that, the Reader is oblig'd to beſtow his utmoſt

[1] *See the* Judgment upon Seneca, Plutarch, and Petronius, *Vol.* I. pag. 158 *& ſeq.*

moſt attention on the different ſingularities, and to examine ſeparately each feature in the Picture.

'Tis thus the Ancients form'd their Characters. As for us, if we were to deſcribe a Temper like that of CATILINE, we ſhould be at a loſs to conceive in one and the ſame Perſon, Qualities which appear to be oppoſite. So much Boldneſs, with ſo great Artifice; ſo much Pride, and ſo much Policy; ſo much fire and impetuoſity in his deſires, joyn'd to ſo much fraud and diſſimulation.

There is a nice difference between Qualities, that ſeem to be the ſame, which 'tis difficult to diſcover. There is ſometimes a mixture of Vice and Virtue in one ſingle Quality, which we never truly ſeparate. It is eaſy for us, indeed, to know Virtues, when they are pure and entire; and ſo, for the moſt part, we allow prudence in councils; quickneſs in execution; and valour in battels. And as for Morals, we confine them to Piety towards God; Integrity with men, and fidelity to our friends, or to our ſuperiors. We make the ſame uſe both of Defects and Vices; and ſo we talk of incapacity in affairs; of baſeneſs towards enemies; of infidelity to friends; of idleneſs, avarice, and ingratitude: but where Nature hath not left great purity in Virtues, where ſhe has left ſome mixture of Virtue amongſt Vices, we want ſometimes penetration to diſcover what lies concealed; ſometimes a nice diſcernment to diſentangle what is confus'd.

Thoſe particular diſtinctions, which variouſly denote the Qualities, according to the Men who poſſeſs them, are yet more remote from our knowledge. The diverſity of Valour is unknown to us: we have but one Courage for all the valiant; one Ambition for all the ambitious; one Honeſty for all good men; and, to ſpeak truth, the character of a Perſon of great deſert, as we generally draw it, may as well fit all the Men of merit now living.

If

If we were to ſpeak of thoſe Dukes of GUISE, whoſe fame will be immortal, we ſhould call them valiant, generous, liberal, ambitious, zealous for the Catholick Religion, and profeſs'd enemies of the Proteſtants: but as this would not ſufficiently diſtinguiſh the Qualities of one from the other, their Characters, conſequently, would not be ſo diſtinguiſh'd as they ought to be. Thoſe Virtues, which Morality and general Diſcourſes repreſent to us as the ſame, aſſume a different Air, by the difference of the humour and genius of the perſons that poſſeſs them.

We judge right enough, that the Conſtable [6], and the Admiral [7], were capable of ſuſtaining the moſt important Affairs; but the difference of their capacity is not ſufficiently mark'd by our Authors. They acquaint us that ANDELOT [8], BUSSI [9], and GIVRY [10], were the ſtouteſt men in the world: but they do not tell us that there was a factious obſtinacy in ANDELOT's Daringneſs; that there appear'd ſomething vain and audacious in BUSSI's Bravery; and that GIVRY's Valour had ever the air of Knight-Errantry.

There is ſomething peculiar in men's Courages that diſtinguiſhes them, as well as ſome ſingularity in their minds, that makes a difference between them. The Courage of the Mareſchal DE CHATILLON

[6] *Anne de Montmorenci, Conſtable of France. He died in the year* 1567.

[7] *Gaſpard de Coligni, Admiral of France, murder'd at Paris in the general Maſſacre of the Proteſtants, in* 1572.

[8] *Francis de Coligny, Lord of Andelot. Brother to Admiral Coligni. He died in* 1569.

[9] *Lewis d' Amboiſe, Lord of Buſſy, &c. He was aſſaſſinated by the Count of Monſoreau, for an intrigue with his Wife, in* 1580.

[10] *De Longvic, Lord of Givry. He was killed at the Siege of Laon in* 1594.

TILLON [11] was a ſlow and lazy intrepedity: that of the Mareſchal DE LA MEILLERAYE [12] was attended with a heat very proper to preſs a Siege, and a paſſion which diſorder'd him in a pitch'd Battel. The Valour of the Mareſchal DE RENZAU [13], was admirable for great Actions; it could ſave a Province, it could preſerve an Army: but one would have thought, that it eſteemed common Dangers below it ſelf, to have beheld it ſo remiſs in little and frequent occaſions, where common ſervice was perform'd. That of the Mareſchal DE GASSION [14], more lively and active, might have been uſeful at all moments; there was not a day, wherein it gave not to our troops ſome advantage over the enemy. 'Tis true, it was not ſo well compoſed, when any thing of great Importance lay at ſtake. This Mareſchal, who had ſo often ventur'd himſelf in falling upon Parties; who was ſo brisk in charging the Rear of an Army, fear'd an entire engagement, being wholly taken up with the thoughts of events, when it was more neceſſary to act, than to think.

Sometimes we aſcribe every thing to Qualities, without conſidering what Humour mixes with them. Sometimes we allow too much to Humour, and don't ſufficiently examine the depth of Qualities. The thoughtful meditating temper of Monſieur DE TURENNE, who was ſtill forming and weighing deſigns in his head, made him paſs for timorous, irreſolute, and uncertain; altho he gave battle with as

[11] *Gaſpard de Coligni, Mareſchal of France. He died in the year* 1646.

[12] *Charles de la Porte, Duke of la Meilleraye, Mareſchal of France. He died in* 1664.

[13] *Joſias, Count of Rantzau, of the illuſtrious Family of Rantzau in the Dutchy of Holſtein, Mareſchal of France. He died in* 1650.

[14] *John de Gaſſion, Mareſchal of France. He died in* 1647, *of a wound he received in the Siege of Lens.*

as much alacrity, as Monſieur DE GASSION went to a skirmiſh. And the natural heat of the Prince of CONDE', made him be thought impetuous in Battels; tho he was maſter of himſelf more than any perſon whatever, in the heat of action; and had more preſence of mind at Lens, Friburgh, Nortlingen, and Senef, than he would, perhaps, have had in his Cloſet.

After ſo long a Diſcourſe upon the Knowledge of Men, I will affirm, that our Hiſtorians have not ſufficiently ſhewn their talent that way, for want of application and judgment to know Men aright. They imagin'd, that a faithful narration of Events was ſufficient to inſtruct us, without conſidering that affairs are done by men who are oftner tranſported by Paſſion, than conducted by Policy. Prudence governs the wiſe; but there are but a few of that ſort, and the moſt wiſe are not ſo at all times: whereas Paſſion governs almoſt all the world, and at moſt times.

In Commonwealths, where the Maxims of true Intereſt ought to be better purſued, we ſee moſt things carried on by a ſpirit of Faction, and all Factions are paſſionate. Paſſion is found every where, and the zeal of the beſt perſons is not free from it. The Animoſity of CATO and CESAR; and the Fury of CICERO againſt ANTHONY, no leſs contributed to the ruin of Liberty, than the ambition of thoſe that ſet up Tyranny. The oppoſition of two great men, equally, but differently, zealous for the good of Holland, had like to have deſtroy'd it, when it had nothing to fear from the Spaniards. Prince MAURICE would have it powerful abroad; BARNEVELT would have it free at home. The firſt put it into a condition to cope with a King of Spain; the ſecond endeavour'd to ſecure it againſt a Prince of ORANGE. It coſt BARNEVELT his life; and what frequently enough happens, the ſticklers for Liberty were deſtroy'd even by the People.

I pass from observations upon History, to reflections upon Politicks: perhaps I may be pardon'd for so doing; but let their reception be what it will, I shall satisfy my self.

In the first establishment of a Republick, the love of Liberty is the chief virtue of the citizens, and the jealousy which it inspires, makes up the principal Policy of the State. As men grow weary of the troubles, perplexities, and dangers, which they must undergo to live always independent, they follow any ambitious man that pleases them, and fall easily from a troublesom Liberty, to an agreeable Subjection. I remember what I have often said in Holland, and even to the Pensioner [15] himself, that men were mistaken as to the temper of the Hollanders. The world believes, that the Hollanders love Liberty; whereas they only hate Oppression. There are amongst them few proud, haughty spirits; and 'tis pride and haughtiness that makes the true Republican. The People there would be apprehensive either of a covetous Prince, who should be able to take away their estates; or of a violent Prince, who should offer outrages to them: but the name or title of Prince, is what they submit to with pleasure. If they love the Republick, 'tis for the benefit of their Trade, more than for any satisfaction they find in being free. The Magistrates love to be independent, to govern those that depend on them: as for the People, they would more easily acknowledge the authority of the Prince, than that of the Magistrates. 'Tis true, that when a Prince of ORANGE had a design to surprize Amsterdam, all declared for the Burgomasters; but that was rather out of a hatred of Violence, than love of Liberty. When another opposed a Peace [16], after a long expensive

[15] *Monsieur de Wit.*
[16] *The Peace of Nimeguen.*

penſive War, a Peace was made in ſpite of him: but it was done thro' a ſenſe of the preſent miſery; and the reſpect they had naturally for him, was only ſuſpended, not deſtroyed. When theſe extraordinary ſtrokes were over, they return'd to the Prince of ORANGE. The Republicans had the diſſatisfaction to ſee the People take up their firſt Affections, and they apprehended a deſpotical Government, without daring to appear jealous of Liberty.

When the Prince of ORANGE had neither poſt nor office in the Government, when he had nothing but his own name to ſupport him, the Penſioner, and Monſieur DE NOORTWICK were the only perſons, that durſt boldly pronounce the Word *Republick* at the Hague. The Family of ORANGE had other Enemies enough; but theſe enemies always ſpoke of the States in general expreſſions, which did not explain the Conſtitution of Government.

Holland, ſays GROTIUS, is a Republick made by chance, which is kept up by their fear of the Spaniards: *Reſpublica caſu facta, quam metus Hiſpanorum continet.* The apprehenſions which France now gives them, produces the ſame effect; and the neceſſity of a good Intelligence unites the Prince to the States, and the States to the Prince. But to judge of things by themſelves, the Hollanders are neither free, nor ſlaves. Their Government is made up of ſeveral pieces, very ſlightly tack'd together; where the power of the Prince, and the liberty of the People, have equal need of artificial props to ſupport themſelves.

Let us now come to what concerns Courts, and reflect upon the effects that Paſſions occaſion there.

In

In what Court have not the Women had an Intereſt, and in what Intrigues are they not concern'd? Did not the Princeſs of Eboly manage all under PHILIP II; as prudent and politick as he was? Did not the Ladies take off HENRY the Great[17], from a War happily begun; and did they not engage him in one both uncertain and dangerous, juſt before he was kill'd? A pique between Cardinal RICHELIEU, and the Duke of BUCKINGHAM, about the Superſcription of a Letter, arm'd England againſt France. Madam DE CHEVREUSE has play'd a hundred Engines, both at home and abroad. And did not the Counteſs of CARLISLE, from the inmoſt receſſes of Whitehall, animate all the Factions of Weſtminſter[18]?

'Tis a Conſolation for us to find, that thoſe who have a Right to govern us, carry the ſame Infirmities about them as we do; and 'tis a great Delight to thoſe that are diſtinguiſhed by Power, to be made for Pleaſure as well as we.

[17] *Henry IV. King of France.*
[18] *See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *under the year* 1676.

RE-

REFLECTIONS

UPON THE

FRENCH TRANSLATORS.

THE performances of our Tranſlators, are generally eſteem'd by all the world. Not that our ABLANCOURT, is to be commended for being critically faithful to his Original: but we muſt admire the agreeable force of his Expreſſion, in which we find nothing harſh or obſcure. You cannot ſay there is one ſingle word wanting in him, for the clearneſs of the ſenſe. And on the other hand, nothing is ſuperfluous in him: nothing that is diſguſtful, nothing that can be par'd off without maiming him. Every word is, as it were, meaſured, to make the Period exact, and yet the Style does not appear leſs natural for it; tho a Syllable more or leſs, would ruin that harmony, I know not how to deſcribe, which is as agreeable to the ear, as that of Verſe. But, in my opinion, he is oblig'd for theſe advantages, to the ſtyle of the Antients, which rules his own; for ſo ſoon as he returns from their Genius to his own, as in his Prefaces and Letters, he loſes the beſt part of all theſe beauties: and he who is an admirable Author, whilſt he is animated by the Spirit of the Greeks and Latins, becomes but an indifferent Writer, when he is only ſupported by himſelf. The ſame happens to the greateſt part of our Tranſlators,

tors, who, in my opinion, ſeem'd ſufficiently convinc'd of their own Sterility, by making Tranſlation their buſineſs: for certainly, a man that places his merit in communicating the thoughts of others, is not very confident of being capable to recommend himſelf by his own: however, the publick is infinitely obliged to him for the pains he takes, to bring us the wealth of foreign Countries, when our own won't ſuffice. I am not of the humour of a certain Perſon of Quality of my acquaintance, who is a declared enemy to all Tranſlations. He is a learned and ingenious Spaniard [1], who cannot endure that what he has learn'd among the Antients, at ſo great an expence of time and labour, ſhould be proſtituted to the lazineſs of every common Reader.

As for me, beſides that I improve in a thouſand places, by the laborious enquiries of Tranſlators, I ſhould be glad to ſee the knowledge of Antiquity become more general; and am well pleas'd to find thoſe Authors admir'd by thoſe very perſons who would have call'd us Pedants, if we had mention'd them in company, when they did not underſtand them. I therefore join my acknowledgment to that of the Publick; but do not part with my eſteem, and can be very liberal of my praiſes for the Tranſlation, when I ſhall be very ſparing of them for the Genius of the Tranſlator. I can ſet a high value on the Verſions of ABLANCOURT, VAUGELAS, DU RYER, and many others, without having any great eſteem for their Wit, if they have not diſcover'd it by ſomething of their own compoſing.

We have the Verſions of two Latin Poems in French Verſe, which deſerve to be as much conſider'd for their beauty, as for the difficulty of the

[1] *Don Antonio de Cordoua, Favourite of Don Juan, and Lieutenant General of the Spaniſh Horſe in Flanders.*

attempt. That of BREBEUF has been generally eſteem'd; and I am neither ſo ſplenetick, nor ſo ſevere, as to oppoſe the reputation it has got in the world. I will obſerve, nevertheleſs, that he hath carried the heat of LUCAN in our language, farther than it goes in his own; and that by attempting to equal the fire of his Poem, he has, if I may be allow'd the Expreſſion, fired himſelf much more. This is what happens to BREBEUF very frequently, but he flags ſometimes; and when LUCAN happily hits on the true beauty of a thought, the Tranſlator falls much below him; as if he had a mind to appear eaſy and natural, when he might be allow'd to exert all his force. You may obſerve a hundred times the truth of my firſt Obſervation; and the ſecond will not appear leſs juſt to you in ſome places: for example, when BREBEUF is to render,

Victrix cauſa Deis placuit, ſed victa Catoni,

He ſays no more than, *The Gods ſerve* CESAR, *and* CATO *follows* POMPEY: which mean Expreſſion does not anſwer the nobleneſs of the Latin; beſides, that it maims the ſenſe of the Author: for LUCAN, who had his imagination full of the Virtue of CATO, intended to raiſe him above the Gods, as to the merit of the cauſe, which occaſion'd the oppoſition; and BREBEUF turns a noble image of CATO raiſed above the Gods, into that of CATO ſubjected to POMPEY.

As for SEGRAIS, he comes infinitely ſhort of VIRGIL, which he frankly acknowledges himſelf; and indeed it would be next to a miracle, to be able to make a Tranſlation equal to ſo excellent an Original. Beſides, one of the greateſt advantages of that Poet, conſiſts in the beauty of the Expreſſion, which ſure it muſt be impoſſible to equal in

our language, ſince it could never be done in his own. SEGRAIS ought to content himſelf with having found out the Genius of VIRGIL, better than any of our Authors; for whatever Graces the *Æneis* has loſt in his hands, I dare affirm, that it by far ſurpaſſes all thoſe Poems, which our Countrymen have publiſhed with more confidence than ſucceſs.

The great application of SEGRAIS, to find out the Genius of the Poet, appears no leſs in his Preface than in the Tranſlation; and in my opinion, he has judg'd well of the whole, except the Characters. In that I cannot be of his opinion; and he muſt pardon me, if I have been diſpleas'd a thouſand times with his Hero, and if I lay hold on this occaſion, to examine the little merit of the good ÆNEAS.

Altho Conquerors uſually take more care to ſee their orders executed upon Earth, than religiouſly to obſerve thoſe of Heaven; yet ſince Italy was promis'd to this Trojan by the Gods, 'tis with reaſon that VIRGIL has given him a great ſubmiſſion to their wills: but when he deſcribes him ſo devout, he ought to have beſtow'd upon him a Devotion full of confidence, which may agree with the ſpirit and temper of Heroes; and not a ſcrupulous Notion of Religion, which never conſiſts with true Valour. A General who firmly believ'd in his Gods, ought to raiſe the greatneſs of his Courage, by the hopes of their aſſiſtance: his condition would be unhappy, if his belief in them could not ſubſiſt without ſuperſtition, which at the ſame time would rob him of the natural uſe both of his underſtanding and his valour. Such an infatuation it was that ruin'd NICIAS, who loſt the army of the Athenians, and himſelf too, by a credulous and ſuperſtitious opinion of the diſpleaſure of the Gods. It fared otherwiſe with ALEXANDER the Great,

who believ'd himſelf to be the Son of JUPITER, that he might undertake more extraordinary Actions. SCIPIO, who pretended, or thought he had a commerce with the Gods, made an advantage of it, to recover the Roman Commonwealth, and overthrow that of the Carthaginians. Ought then the Son of VENUS, aſſured by JUPITER of his proſperity, and future glory, to ſhew his Piety only in fearing danger, and in diſtruſting the ſucceſs of every undertaking? SEGRAIS upon this defends a cauſe that perplexes him, and has ſo much affection for his Hero, that he rather chuſes not to expreſs the ſenſe of VIRGIL in all its latitude, than frankly to lay open the ſhameful fears of poor ÆNEAS:

Extemplò Æneæ ſolvuntur frigore membra.
Ingemit, & dupliees tendens ad ſydera palmas,
Talia voce refert: O terque quaterque beati,
Queis ante ora patrum, Trojæ ſub mœnibus altis
Contigit oppetere [a] *!*

I own, that theſe ſudden qualms will ſeize us ſometimes in ſpite of our ſelves, thro' a defect in our Conſtitution: but ſince VIRGIL had the liberty to model ÆNEAS's according to his own fancy, I wonder he ſhould give him one ſuſceptible of theſe frights. Philoſophers take a pride in natural defects, when they know how to correct them by wiſdom. SOCRATES was eaſily induc'd to confeſs thoſe evil inclinations, which Philoſophy taught him to conquer. But Nature ought to be all noble in Heroes; and if by the neceſſity of the humane condition, it muſt ſometimes make a falſe ſtep, their Reaſon is employ'd in moderating tranſports, not in ſurmounting weakneſſes: nay, many times,

[a] Virgil. *Æneid. Lib.* I. *v.* 96—100.

times, their impulſes have ſomething divine in them, which is above Reaſon. What is call'd *Irregularity* in others, is in them but a full liberty, where their ſouls diſplay themſelves in their utmoſt extent. In fine, their impetuoſity makes that heroick Virtue, which forces our admiration, without paying a deference to our judgment. But mean Paſſions diſgrace them: and if Friendſhip ſometimes exacts fears and afflictions from them, (like thoſe of ACHILLES for PATROCLUS, and of ALEXANDER for HEPHESTION) it is not allow'd them in their own particular dangers and misfortunes, either to ſhew the ſame fear, or make the ſame complaints. Now ÆNEAS knows how to fear and lament upon every occaſion that concerns him: 'tis true, he doth the ſame for his friends; but we ought to attribute that, not ſo much to a noble and generous Paſſion, as to an inexhauſtible ſource of apprehenſions and tears, which naturally furniſhes him with them, both for himſelf and others.

Extemplò Æneæ ſolvuntur frigore membra.
Ingemit, & duplices tendens ad ſydera palmas.

Seized as he is with this Coldneſs thro' all his members, the firſt ſign of life we diſcover in him is his groaning: then he lifts up his hands to heaven; and in all appearance would implore its ſuccour, if the condition wherein the good Hero finds himſelf, would afford him ſtrength enough to raiſe his mind to the Gods, and pray with ſome attention. His Soul, which could not apply it ſelf to any thing, abandons it ſelf to lamentations; and like thoſe deſolate Widows, who upon the very firſt trouble they meet with, wiſh they were in the grave with their dear Huſbands, the poor ÆNEAS bewails his not having periſh'd before Troy with HECTOR, and eſteems them very happy, who

left their bones in the boſom of ſo ſweet, and ſo dear a Country. Some people, perhaps, may believe that he ſays ſo becauſe he envies their happineſs; but I am perſuaded, that 'tis for fear of the danger that threatens him.

'Tis farther to be obſerv'd, that all theſe lamentations begin almoſt as ſoon as the Storm. The Winds blow fiercely, the Air is darkned, it thunders, it lightens, the Billows ſwell and grow more furious: all this is neither better nor worſe than what happens in all Tempeſts. Yet there is neither Maſt ſplit, nor Sails torn to pieces, nor Oars broken, nor Rudder loſt, nor Leak made, for the water to enter the Ship; which a man ſhould at leaſt have waited, before he took on in earneſt. For there are a thouſand Boys in England, and as many Women in Holland, who would hardly ſhew their Amazement, where the Hero ſhews his Deſpair.

'Tis, methinks, very remarkable in VIRGIL, that the Gods ſhould leave ÆNEAS wholly to himſelf, when he is upon the lamenting ſtrain. Let him ſpeak of the deſtruction of Troy, in as compaſſionate terms as he can, they won't interfere to moderate his Tears; but as ſoon as there's a great Reſolution to take, or an Affair difficult to execute, they won't truſt either his capacity, or his courage; and theſe Deities are ready upon every occaſion to take that upon them, which other great men are uſed to undertake and execute by themſelves. I know very well how neceſſary the intervention of the Gods is to an Epick Poem; but ſtill that does not hinder the Poet from laying a greater ſtreſs upon the Valour of his Hero: for if the Hero is too confident, who in contempt of the Gods, will take all upon himſelf, certainly the God is too favourable, who in performing all, quite drowns the merit of the Hero,

No man better underſtood this critical management of the aſſiſtance of Heaven, and the courage of great Men, than LONGINUS. "AJAX, *ſays* "*he*, finding himſelf engaged in battle, in a ter- "rible dark night, doth not aſk JUPITER to "reſcue him from the danger he was in; that had "been below him: he doth not aſk of him a ſu- "pernatural ſtrength, to overcome with ſecurity; "for then he ſhould have had too ſmall a ſhare in "the Victory: he only begs for *Light*, that he "might be able to diſcern his Enemies, and to ex- "erciſe againſt them his own valour: *da lucem ut* "*videam*[3]."

The greateſt fault of the *Pharſalia*, is, that properly ſpeaking, 'tis nothing but a Hiſtory in verſe, where illuſtrious Men perform almoſt all things by methods purely human. PETRONIUS had reaſon to blame him for it, and remarks judiciouſly, that *per ambages Deorumque miniſteria & fabuloſum ſententiarum tormentum præcipitandus eſt liber ſpiritus, ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat, quam religioſæ orationis ſub teſtibus fides.* But the *Æneis* is an eternal Fable where the Gods are introduced to manage, and execute every thing. As for the good ÆNEAS, he hardly concerns himſelf in any important and glorious Deſign: 'tis enough for him, that he diſcharges his Conſcience in the offices of a pious, tender, and compaſſionate man. He carries his Father on his ſhoulders; he conjugally laments his dear CREUSA; he cauſes his Nurſe to be interred, and makes a funeral Pile for the truſty Pilot PALINURUS, for whom he ſheds a thouſand tears.

Here was a ſorry Hero in Paganiſm, who would have made an admirable Saint among Chriſtians, and work'd miracles plentifully. In ſhort, he was

[3] *Longinus in his Treatiſe of the* Sublime, *Chap.* 8.

fitter to make the Founder of a religious Order, than a State. To consider him now as to his Religion, I can heartily reverence his Piety: but if I were to judge of him by the impressions that Glory makes upon him, I can never endure such a Conqueror, that affords nothing but Tears in his misfortunes, and Fears in every danger that befals him. I cannot endure that he should become master of so delicious a Country as Italy, with qualities that were more proper to lose his own, than to subdue another's.

VIRGIL, was undoubtedly very compassionate in his temper. In my opinion, the reason why he makes the desolate Trojans complain of so many misfortunes, was because he found a secret pleasure in relenting. Had he not been of that Constitution, he would not have ascrib'd to the good ÆNEAS so great an affection for his dear Troy; for Heroes easily part with the remembrance of their native Country, in Nations where they are to perform great exploits. Their Souls, wholly taken up with ideas of Glory, have no room to entertain such trifling endearments. The Trojans therefore should have been less afflicted for their misery. Military men, when they would excite our pity for their misfortunes, do, in truth, make us only despise them for their weakness. But ÆNEAS particularly ought to have been taken up with his great Design; and to have diverted his thoughts from his past sufferings, upon the new settlement he was going to make: he, that was decreed to found the Greatness and Virtue of the Romans, ought to have had an elevation and magnanimity worthy of them.

In other things, SEGRAIS could not bestow too many commendations upon the *Æneis*; and perhaps, I am pleas'd with the fourth and sixth Books, as much as he is himself. As for the Characters, I must own they don't affect me: and I find

find thoſe of HOMER as lively, as thoſe of VIRGIL flat and inſipid.

And indeed, there's no man but finds himſelf elevated by the impreſſion the Character of ACHILLES makes upon him. There's no man to whom the impetuous Courage of AJAX doth not give ſome motion of impatience; neither is there any who is not animated, and excited by the Valour of DIOMEDES. The Rank and Gravity of AGAMEMNON, muſt certainly imprint a reſpect in every Reader. Who hath not a veneration for the conſummate Experience and Wiſdom of NESTOR? In whom does not the deliberate Induſtry of the ſubtle and ingenious ULYSSES raiſe the imagination? The unfortunate Valour of HECTOR makes him lamented by all the world: the miſerable condition of old King PRIAMUS, touches the moſt obdurate ſoul; and altho Beauty has, as it were, a ſecret privilege to reconcile the Affections to it, yet that of PARIS and HELENA attracts nothing but our indignation, when we conſider the blood it caus'd to be ſpilt, and the fatal misfortunes it drew after it. However it be, every thing animates in HOMER, every thing affects: but in VIRGIL, who is not tired with the good ÆNEAS, and his dear ACHATES? If you except NISUS and EURYALUS, (who, indeed, intereſs you in all their adventures) you muſt of neceſſity languiſh in the company of all the reſt, ſuch as ILIONEUS, SERGESTUS, MNESTEUS, CLOANTES, GIAS, and ſuch other ordinary men that accompany an indifferent Leader.

Judge by this, how much we ought to admire the Poetry of VIRGIL, ſince in ſpite of the ſuperlative virtues of the Heroes of HOMER, and the little merit of his own, the beſt Criticks will not allow the Latin, to be inferior the Greek Poet.

UPON

TRAGEDIES.

I Confeſs we excel in Dramatical Compoſitions; and, without flattering CORNEILLE, I think I may prefer many of his Tragedies before thoſe of Antiquity. I know the antient Tragedians have had admirers in all times; but am not ſo ſure that the Sublime which is aſcrib'd to them, is built upon a good foundation. To believe that SOPHOCLES and EURIPIDES are ſo admirable as we are told they are, one muſt fancy greater matters of their Works, than can be conceived from their Tranſlations; and in my opinion, Language and Expreſſion, muſt have a conſiderable ſhare in the beauty of their Tragedies.

Thro' all the praiſes which their moſt zealous and celebrated Advocates give them, methinks one may perceive, that Greatneſs, Magnificence, and above all, Dignity, were things they little underſtood: Wits they were indeed, but cramp'd by the frugality of a ſmall Republick, where a neceſſitous Liberty was all they had to boaſt of. When they were oblig'd to repreſent the Majeſty of a great King, they made horrid work with a Grandeur that was unknown to them; becauſe they ſaw nothing but low and mean objects, to which their ſenſes were in a manner enſlaved.

It is true, that their Poets being diſguſted with theſe Objects, did ſometimes raiſe themſelves to what was ſublime and wonderful; but then they brought ſo many Gods and Goddeſſes into their Tragedies, that hardly any thing human was to be found in them. What was great, was fabulous; what was natural, mean and contemptible. In CORNEILLE, Grandeur ſeems to have attain'd the laſt perfection. The Figures he employs, when he would embelliſh it with any ornament, are proper and ſuitable: but, for the moſt part, he neglects the pomp of Metaphors, and does not plunder the Heavens to enrich with its ſpoils, what is conſiderable enough upon earth. His principal aim is to penetrate into the nature of things; and the full image he gives of them, makes that impreſſion which pleaſes men of ſenſe.

Indeed, Nature is to be admir'd wherever we find it; and when we have recourſe to figurative Ornaments, with which we think to embelliſh our ſubject, 'tis many times a tacit confeſſion, that we know not what is proper for it. To this are owing moſt of our Figures and Similes, which I cannot approve, unleſs they are rare, altogether noble, and juſt: otherwiſe 'tis nothing elſe but a trick in the Author to drop a ſubject, which he does not underſtand. How beautiful ſoever Compariſons may be, yet they ſute much better with Epick Poetry, than Tragedy: in an Epick Poem the mind ſeeks to pleaſe it ſelf out of its ſubject; in Tragedy, the ſoul full of ſentiments, and poſſeſs'd with paſſions, does not care to be interrupted by vain flaſhy Similes.

But let us return to the Antients, from whom we have inſenſibly digreſs'd; and to do them juſtice, let us acknowledge that they have much better ſucceeded in expreſſing the Qualities of their Heroes, than in deſcribing the magnificence of great Kings.

Kings. A confuſed Notion of the Grandeur of Babylon ſpoil'd, rather than rais'd their imagination; but they could not be impoſed upon as to Fortitude, Conſtancy, Juſtice, and Wiſdom, of which they had daily inſtances before their eyes. Their ſenſes being wean'd from Pomp in a mean Republick, gave their reaſon a greater latitude to conſider Men in themſelves.

Thus nothing took them off from the ſtudy of human Nature, and from applying themſelves to the knowledge of Vice and Virtue, Inclinations and Tempers: hence it is that they learnt to paint their Characters ſo well, that juſter cannot be deſir'd, conſidering the time they liv'd in, if we will be contented to know Perſons by their Actions.

CORNEILLE thought it not enough to make them act: he has dived to the very bottom of their ſoul, to find out the Principle of their actions; he hath deſcended into their heart, to ſee how their Paſſions are form'd there, and diſcover the moſt hidden ſprings of their motions. As for the antient Tragedians, either they neglect the Paſſions by applying themſelves to an exact repreſentation of the Incidents; or elſe they make Speeches amidſt the greateſt perturbations, and amuſe you with moral Sentences, when you expect nothing but Confuſion and Deſpair from them.

CORNEILLE takes notice of the principal Events, and expoſes as much of the Action as decency can allow: but this is not all; he gives the Paſſions all the extent they require, and leads Nature, without conſtraining or abandoning her too much to her ſelf. He has baniſh'd from the Theatre of the Antients all that was barbarous; he hath ſoften'd the Horror of their Drama, by ſome tender paſſions of Love judiciouſly interwoven. But then he takes care all along to preſerve our Fear and Pity for the tragical ſubjects that deſerve them, without

without diverting us from real Paſſions, to whining tireſome Scenes of Love; which tho varied an hundred ſeveral times, are, for all that, ſtill the ſame.

As ready as I am to acknowledge the merit of this excellent Author, yet I will not pretend that none but his Pieces deſerve applauſe on our Theatre. We have been pleaſed and affected with *Mariana*, *Sophonisba*, *Alcionea*, *Venceſlaus*, *Stilico*, *Andromache*, *Britannicus* [1], and many others; from whoſe beauty I would not be thought in the leaſt to derogate, becauſe I do not name them.

I avoid being tedious as much as poſſibly I can; and will only add, that no Nation can diſpute with us the ſuperiority in Tragedy. As for thoſe of the Italians, it is not worth the while to ſpeak of them; to name them only is enough to create a Diſtaſte. Their *Peter's Feaſt* [2] would make a Stoick loſe all his patience; and I never ſaw it acted, but I wiſh'd the Author of the Piece had been deſtroy'd with his Libertine.

There are ſome old Engliſh Tragedies [3], which, if ſome things were retrench'd in them, might be made admirable Plays. In all the reſt, written in thoſe days, you ſee nothing but a ſhapeleſs indigeſted maſs; a croud of confuſed adventures, without any regard to Time, Place, or Decency; where Eyes that delight in cruel ſights, are fed with Murders, and Bodies weltering in Blood. Should the Poets palliate the horror of them by relations, as it is the cuſtom in France, they would deprive the Spectators of that ſight which pleaſes them moſt.

The men of better breeding among them condemn this cuſtom, which perhaps owes its eſtabliſhment

[1] *Triſtan is the Author of* Mariana; *Mairet of* Sophonisba; *Du Ryer of* Alcionea; *Rotrou of* Wenceſlaus; *Corneille Junior of* Stilico; *Racine of* Andromache *and* Britannicus.

[2] *Call'd in Engliſh*, The Libertine Deſtroy'd.

[3] *Such as the* Catilina *and the* Sejanus *of Ben. Johnſon, &c.*

bliſhment to ſomething inhuman and
an antient habit, or the humour of th
general, prevails over the delicacy o
vate perſons. To die, is ſo ſmall a
Engliſh, that they want images more
Death it ſelf to affect them. Henc
upon very good ground, we object t
they allow too much to their ſenſes up
We muſt alſo bear with the reproac
upon us, of paſſing to the other ex
amongſt us, we admire Tragedies
tenderneſſes of Paſſion, which make
ſion ſtrong enough upon the Mind.
ſon, being ſometimes diſſatisfy'd wi
managed, we expect a fuller emotio
tion of our Players; and ſometimes
the Actor, more tranſported than
fury and deſpair to an ordinary a
common grief. The truth is, wh
tender, is, with us, generally but ſo
to form pity, ſcarce amounts to Te
tion ſerves us inſtead of rapture
inſtead of horror. Our ſentiments
enough; and Paſſions, when they a
work'd up, only excite imperfect
ſouls, that neither leave them whol
port them out of themſelves.

…mantick humour *, when
…for her ſo ſerious an af-
…had been no falſe nicety
…expected his declaration,
…the conduct of an A-

…Probability, it's no won-
…nd among the Spaniards
…all the Gallantry of the
…n the Moors, it retains
…frick, that is foreign and
…and too extraordinary to
…neſs of Rules. Beſides,
…-Errantry, common to all
…upon odd and freakiſh
…g women too from their
…e vanity from their Books
…ulous tales of the women
…Thus both ſexes fill their
…tions; and moſt Lovers,
…interpret the ſcrupling of
…: to be an indifference

…ves very regular meaſures
…:, nevertheleſs I dare be
…e 'tis ſeldom extravagant,
…ing it, or in the ordinary
…which is call'd a *Paſſionate*
…of being thought ridicu-
…e, being taken up with
…way to it, as the Spani-
…Madrid, where nothing
…1 motion.

At

* *…here a kind of Pun, of Me-*
…la queuë. See Les Precieuſes

the ſame Character; for what reaſon I cannot tell, unleſs it be that the Women of this age, think all Men ought to be Gallants.

We are ready to acknowledge that the Wits of Madrid have a more fruitful invention than ours; and this has made us borrow from them moſt of our Plots, which we have fill'd with paſſionate and amorous Diſcourſes, and reduc'd to more regularity and decorum. The reaſon is, that in Spain, where the Women are hardly ever ſeen, the Poet exhauſts his imagination in contriving ingenious ways to bring his Lovers together; and in France, where the freedom of Converſation is allow'd, the ingenuity of the Author is employ'd in expreſſing the ſentiments, in a tender and amorous manner.

A Spaniſh Lady[*], not long ago, was reading the Romance of *Cleopatra*, and after a tedious relation of Adventures, falling upon a nice Converſation between a Lover and his Miſtreſs, who were alike paſſionate, *What a deal of Wit illemploy'd is here*, ſaid ſhe, *and to what end ſo many fine Speeches when they are got together?*

This is one of the prettieſt Reflections that ever I heard made in all my life; and CALPRENEDE, tho a Frenchman, ought to have remembred, that Lovers born in a hotter climate than that of France, need but few words on ſuch occaſions. But the good judgment of that Lady would not be receiv'd in our ordinary Gallantries, where a man muſt ſpeak a thouſand times of a ſham Paſſion before he can perſuade his Miſtreſs; where he muſt daily complain to her, before he finds an opportunity of putting an end to that affected Pain.

The *Precieuſe*, or *Finical Lady* of MOLIERE, is ridiculous in her Carriage as well as Language, for

[*] *The Princeſs of Iſenghien.*

for not ſhaking off the romantick humour *, when her friends were treating for her ſo ſerious an affair as Marriage: but it had been no falſe nicety with a Gallant, to have expected his declaration, and gradual advance in the conduct of an Amour.

As for Regularity and Probability, it's no wonder they are leſs to be found among the Spaniards than the French: for as all the Gallantry of the Spaniards is deriv'd from the Moors, it retains ſtill a certain tincture of Africk, that is foreign and uncouth to other Nations, and too extraordinary to be ſuited with the exactneſs of Rules. Beſides, the old whim of Knight-Errantry, common to all Spain, ſets the Cavaliers upon odd and freakiſh Adventures. The young women too from their childhood, learn the ſame vanity from their Books of Chivalry, and the fabulous tales of the women that are about them. Thus both ſexes fill their minds with the ſame Notions; and moſt Lovers, men and women, would interpret the ſcrupling of an amorous extravagance to be an indifference unworthy of their Paſſion.

Tho Love never obſerves very regular meaſures in any Country whatſoever, nevertheleſs I dare be bold to ſay, that in France 'tis ſeldom extravagant, either in the way of making it, or in the ordinary effects it produces. That which is call'd a *Paſſionate Love* runs a great riſque of being thought ridiculous: for Gentlemen there, being taken up with various buſineſs, give not way to it, as the Spaniards do in the idleneſs of Madrid, where nothing but Love can put them in motion.

* *M. de St. Evremond brings in here a kind of Pun, of Moliere, viz.* prendre le Roman par la queuë. *See* Les Precieuſes Ridicules *of that Poet.*

At Paris, we are buſied by the aſſiduity of making our Court, the diſcharge of an Office, or the purſuit of an Employment; Fortune outrivalling Miſtreſſes, in a place where it is the cuſtom to prefer that which one owes to himſelf, to what he loves. The Ladies, who are to take their meaſures accordingly, are alſo more gallant than paſſionate; nay, and make uſe of Gallantry to inſinuate into Court-Intrigues and Buſineſs. There are but few who are not govern'd by Vanity and Intereſt; and the Gallants and their Miſtreſſes vie who ſhall make the beſt uſe one of another for attaining their ſeveral ends.

Love however mingles with this ſpirit of Intereſt; but it is very ſeldom the Maſter: for, the conduct that we are oblig'd to follow in our Affairs, accuſtoms us to ſome regularity in our Pleaſures, or, at leaſt, keeps us from extravagance. In Spain there is no living without Love; but what is called *Love* in France, to ſpeak properly, is no more than *to talk of Love, and to mix the vanity of Gallantries with dictates of Ambition.*

Theſe differences being conſidered, 'tis not to be wonder'd that the Spaniſh Comedy, which is nothing but a repreſentation of their Adventures, is as irregular as thoſe can be; and that the French Comedy, which deviates but little from the practice of our Nation, obſerves the ſame decorum in the repreſentation of our Amours, which commonly we obſerve in reality. I confeſs, that Judgment, which ought to be of all Countries, has eſtabliſh'd ſome Rules, which are no where to be diſpens'd with: but it is a hard matter not to make ſome allowances to Cuſtom, ſince ARISTOTLE himſelf, in his *Art of Poetry*, places ſometimes Perfection in that which was beſt liked at Athens, and not in that which is really moſt perfect.

Comedy

. Comedy cannot pretend to greater privileges than the Laws, which tho they ought all to be founded on Juſtice, are nevertheleſs different, according to the different genius of the People who made them. And if we are oblig'd to retain the air of Antiquity; if we muſt preſerve the Character of Heroes who have been dead two thouſand years ago, when they are to be repreſented upon the Stage; how is it poſſible not to follow the humours, and ſuit our ſelves to the manners of the living, when we repreſent to their eyes, what they do every day?

Nevertheleſs, what authority ſoever Cuſtom may challenge, without doubt Reaſon ought to have the prerogative; but yet it ought not to be over-rigid: for, in things which are altogether calculated to pleaſe, as Comedy, it is uneaſy to be ſubjected to too auſtere a Confinement, and to cramp and fetter thoſe Subjects, where we aim at nothing but diverſion.

OF THE

ITALIAN COMEDY.

SO much for the French and Spaniſh Comedies: I'll now give my opinion of the Italian. I will not ſpeak of *Amynta*, *Paſtor Fido*, *Phillis of Sciro*, and other Plays of that nature. I ought to be better acquainted than I am with the graces of the Italian Language; and therefore I deſign to ſpeak

only of Comedies that are acted upon the Stage. What we see in France upon the Italian Theatre, is not properly Comedy, since there is no true Plot in it; no coherence in the Subject; no Character strictly observ'd, nor regularity in the Composition, at least according to the rules of Art: in short, 'tis nothing but a kind of ill-form'd consort amongst several Actors, each of whom furnishes, out of his own head, what he judges proper for the part he acts. To take it rightly, it is no more than a medley of impertinent *Concetti* in the mouth of Lovers, and silly buffoonries in that of their *Zanis* [1]. There is no such thing as good Sense any where in it; but a kind of false Wit predominates, either in the Thoughts, which are borrow'd from the *Heavens*, *Sun*, *Stars*, and *Elements*, or in an affectation of Simplicity, which hath nothing of true Nature in it.

The Buffoons, I grant, are inimitable; and of an hundred that I have seen ape and mimick them, not one could ever come near them: and for Grimaces, Postures, Motions, Agility, Suppleness and distorting of their Faces, which they can vary and alter as they please; it is certain, that if one must be a great Lover of idle jesting and drollery, to be taken with what he hears, he must be also very grave and composed, not to laugh at what he sees: a man would affect too great a nicety, not to be pleas'd with their acting, because a Critick will not be satisfied with their discourse.

All representations wherein the Mind has no share in the entertainment, are tedious at long run; nevertheless they surprize, and are agreeable for some time, before they tire us. As Buffoonry diverts not a man of breeding, but by intervals, it ought to be soon over; and the Hearers should not have time

[1] *Harlequins, or Buffoons, in the Italian Plays.*

time enough allow'd them, to reflect upon the exactneſs of the diſcourſe, and conſider what is truly natural. 'Twere well if they obſerv'd this conduct in the Italian Comedy, where a greater mortification comes upon the neck of another; and the variety inſtead of relieving us, brings us only ſomething new to tire us.

The truth is, when you are weary of the Buffoons that have too long kept the Stage, the Lovers ſtep in next to compleat your perſecution. This, in my opinion, is the worſt of puniſhments to a delicate and nice man, who would, with more reaſon, prefer a ſpeedy death before the patience of hearing them, than the Lacedemonian in BOCCALINI had, when he choſe the gallows, before the reading of the tedious Hiſtory of the *War of Piſa*, written by GUICHARDIN*. If any man over fond of living, is able to endure ſo killing a fatigue, inſtead of ſome agreeable diverſity to refreſh his mind, all the change he finds is the impertinence of a Doctor that plagues him infinitely more. I know, that to repreſent the follies of a Pedant aright, he muſt be made to turn all his diſcourſe upon that ſort of Learning he is maſter of: but that without ever anſwering one ſingle Queſtion, he ſhould cite a thouſand Authors, with a volubility that puts him out of breath; this is to bring a mad man upon the Stage, who ought to be ſent to Bedlam, and not juſtly to repreſent the impertinence of a Pedantick Scholar.

* Inſtantiſſimamente ſupplicò, che per tutti gl'anni della ſua vita lo condanneſſero a remare in una Galea, che lo muraſſero trà due mura, e che per miſericordia fino lo ſcorticaſſero vivo; perche il legger quei Diſcorſi ſenza fine, quei Conſigli tanto tedioſi, quelle frediſſime Conſcioni, fatte nella preſa d'ogni vil Colombaia, era crepacuore che ſuperava tutti gl'aculei Ingleſi, &c. *BOCCAL. Ragguagli di Parnaſſo*, Cent. I. Ragg. VI.

PETRONIUS goes a different way to work, when he ridicules EUMOLPUS: the Pedantry of SIDIAS is otherwiſe manag'd by THEOPHILE: the Character of CARITIDES in the *Facheux* or *Moroſe* of MOLIERE, is altogether exact; and nothing can be cut off from it, without disfiguring the whole Piece. Theſe are the ridiculous Scholars who may be pleaſantly enough repreſented upon the Stage: but is it not a moſt wretched diverſion for a Gentleman to be plagued with a pitiful Pedant, whom Books have beſotted; and who, as I ſaid, ought carefully to be ſhut up, to conceal from us the frailty of our human Condition, and the miſery of our nature?

But I muſt not launch out too far in my obſervations upon the Italian Comedy. To ſum up then, in a few words, what I have ſufficiently enlarg'd upon, I ſay, that inſtead of agreeable Lovers, you have nothing but affected talkers of Love; inſtead of natural Comedians, incomparable Buffoons, but ſtill they are Buffoons: inſtead of ridiculous Pedants, wretched mad Scholars. There is hardly any part but what is forc'd, unleſs it be that of PANTALON, which is the leaſt eſteem'd, and yet is the only one that does not exceed the bounds of probability.

Tragedy was the chief delight of the ancient Commonwealth; and the old Romans, endow'd only with a rough Virtue, introduced no other Examples in their Theatres, but ſuch as might fortify their natural diſpoſition, and entertain their habitual fierceneſs and auſterity. When politeneſs of Converſation was joyned to their greatneſs of Soul, then they began to take delight in Comedy, and ſometimes they were pleaſed with noble ideas, and ſometimes diverted with agreeable ones.

As ſoon as Rome grew corrupted, the Romans forſook Tragedy, and could not endure to ſee upon

on the Stage any ſevere repreſentation of the ancient Virtue. From that time, to the ruin of the Republick, Comedy was the recreation of the great Men, the diverſion of the Polite, and the amuſement of a People either grown looſe or civiliz'd.

A little before the Civil Wars, the Romans were again animated with the ſpirit of Tragedy: their genius ſecretly diſpoſing and preparing them for the fatal revolutions that happen'd afterward. CESAR wrote one, and many perſons of quality did the like. The troubles ceaſing under AUGUSTUS, and peace being reſtor'd and ſettled, all ſorts of Pleaſures were cultivated. Comedies came again into vogue; the Pantomimi were in credit; and Tragedy ſtill preſerv'd a great reputation. Under the reign of NERO, SENECA was taken up with dire ſpeculations, which ſet him upon writing thoſe Tragedies that are ſtill extant. When Corruption was at the height, and Vice univerſal, the Pantomimi wholly ruin'd both Tragedy and Comedy: Wit had no more ſhare in Plays; and all they aim'd at, was to divert the Spectators with ſuch poſtures and motions, as would give them voluptuous ideas.

The modern Italians think it enough for them to be warm'd by the ſame ſun, to breathe the ſame air, and to inhabit the ſame country with the ancient Romans: but they leave to their Hiſtorians to talk of that ſevere Virtue which the Romans practis'd; and therefore think they have no need of Tragedy, to animate them to hard and difficult Things, which they have no mind to undertake. As they affect the ſoftneſs of an ordinary, and the delights of a voluptuous life, ſo they love Plays that have relation to both. This has introduced that mixture of Comedy, and diverſion of Mimicks, which we ſee upon all the Stages of Italy. And this is almoſt

all that can be ſaid of the Italians, who, as yet, have appear'd in France.

All the preſent Actors of their Company are generally good Comedians, even thoſe that act Lovers; and to do them neither injuſtice nor favour, I muſt own, that they are excellent Players, who have very bad Plays. Perhaps they can make no good ones; perhaps they have reaſon not to have any; for as the Earl of BRISTOL[1] was, one day, objecting to CINTHIO, that there was not probability enough in their Pieces; he anſwer'd, *That if there was more, good Comedians with good Comedies might go ſtarve.*

OF THE

ENGLISH

COMEDY.

THERE is no Comedy more conformable to that of the Ancients, than the Engliſh, as for what relates to the Manners. It is not a meer piece of Gallantry, full of Adventures and amorous Diſcourſes, as in Spain and France; but a repreſentation of the ordinary way of living, according to the various Humours and different Characters of Men. It is an *Alchymiſt*, who by the illuſions of this Art, feeds the deceitful hopes of a vain *Curioſo*: it is a *ſilly credulous Coxcomb*, whoſe fooliſh facility

[1] *George Digby, Earl of Briſtol. He died in the year 1676.*

cility is continually abuſed: it is ſometimes a *ridiculous Politician*, grave and compos'd, ſtarch'd in every thing, myſteriouſly ſuſpicious, that thinks to find out hidden deſigns in the moſt common intentions, and to diſcover artifice in the moſt innocent actions of Life: it is a *whimſical Lover*, a *ſwaggering Bully*, a *pedantick Scholar*, the one with natural extravagancies, the other with ridiculous affectations. The truth is, theſe Cheats and Cullies, theſe Politicians, and other Characters ſo ingeniouſly deviſed, are carry'd on too far, in our opinion; as thoſe which are to be ſeen upon our Stage, are a little too faint to the reliſh of the Engliſh; and the reaſon of that, perhaps, is, becauſe the Engliſh think too much, and we, commonly, not enough.

And indeed, we are ſatisfied with the firſt images of things; and by ſticking to the bare outſide, we generally take appearance for reality; and the eaſy and free for what is natural. Upon this head I ſhall obſerve, by the by, that theſe two laſt qualities are ſometimes moſt improperly confounded: the eaſy and the natural agree well enough in their oppoſition to what is ſtiff and forc'd; but when we are to dive into the nature of things, or the natural humour of perſons, it will be granted me, that the eaſy will ſcarce carry us far enough. There is ſomething within us, ſomething hidden, that would diſcover it ſelf, if we ſounded the ſubject a little more. It is as difficult for us to enter in, as for the Engliſh to get out: they become maſters of the thing they think on, tho they are not ſo of their own thoughts. Their mind is not at reſt, even when they poſſeſs their Subject; they ſtill dig when there is no more ore to be got, and go beyond the juſt and natural idea, which ought always to be maintain'd, by carrying their enquiries too far. The truth is, I never ſaw men of better underſtanding than the French,

who apply themſelves to conſider things with due attention; and the Engliſh, that can ſhake off their too deep meditations, to return to that faculty of Diſcourſe, and freedom of Wit, which, if poſſible, ought always to be had. The fineſt Gentlemen in the world, are the French that think, and the Engliſh that ſpeak.

I ſhould inſenſibly run into too general conſiderations; and therefore muſt reaſſume my ſubject of Comedy, and obſerve a conſiderable difference which is to be found betwixt theirs and ours. It conſiſts in this, that being zealous to copy the regularity of the Ancients, we ſtill drive to the principal Action, without any other variety than that of the means that bring us to it. It is not to be denied but that the repreſentation of one principal Event ought to be the ſole ſcope and end propoſed in Tragedy; for we cannot without ſome violence and pain find our ſelves taken off from what employed our firſt thoughts. The misfortune of an unhappy King, the ſad and tragical death of a great Hero, wholly confine the mind to theſe objects; and all the variety it cares for, is to know the different means that contributed to bring about this principal action; but Comedy being contriv'd to divert and not to buſie us, provided probability be obſerv'd, and extravagance avoided, variety in the opinion of the Engliſh, is an agreeable ſurprize and change that pleaſes; whereas the continual expectation of one and the ſame thing, wherein there ſeems to be no great matter of importance, muſt of neceſſity make our attention flag.

Thus, inſtead of repreſenting a ſignal Cheat carry'd on by means all relating to the ſame end, they repreſent ſeveral Cheats, each of which produces its proper effect. As they ſcarce ever ſtick to the Unity of Action, that they may repreſent a principal perſon, who diverts them by different actions: ſo they often

often quit that principal perſon, to ſhew various things that happen to ſeveral perſons in publick places. BEN JOHNSON takes this courſe in his *Bartholomew-Fair:* we find the ſame thing in *Epſom-Wells*[1]; and in both theſe Comedies, the ridiculous Adventures of thoſe publick places are comically repreſented.

There are ſome other Plays which have in a manner two Plots, that are interwoven ſo ingeniouſly the one into the other, that the mind of the Spectators (which might be offended by too ſenſible a change) finds nothing but ſatisfaction in the agreeable variety they produce. It is to be confeſſed that regularity is wanting here; but the Engliſh are of opinion, that the Liberties which are taken in order to pleaſe the better, ought to be preferr'd before exact Rules, which dull Authors improve to an art of tiring their Audience.

Rules are to be obſerv'd for avoiding Confuſion; good Senſe is to be follow'd for moderating the flight of a luxuriant Fancy: but Rules muſt not ſo conſtrain the mind, as to fetter it; and a ſcrupulous Reaſon ought to be baniſh'd, which adhering too ſtrictly to exactneſs, leaves nothing free and natural. They who cannot attain a Genius, which Nature hath denied them, aſcribe all to Art, which they may acquire; and to ſet a value upon the only merit they have, which is that of being regular, they employ all their intereſt to damn any Piece that is not altogether ſo. As for thoſe that love the Ridicule; that are pleaſed to ſee the follies of Mankind; that are affected with true Characters; they will find ſome of the Engliſh Comedies as much, or perhaps, more to their reliſh, than any they have ever ſeen.

Our

[1] *One of Shadwell's Plays.*

Our MOLIERE, whom the Ancients have inſpired with the true ſpirit of Comedy, equals their BEN JOHNSON in repreſenting truly the various humours and different ways of Men, both obſerving in their Characters a juſt regard to the peculiar taſte and genius of their own nation: I believe they have both carried that point as far as the Ancients ever did; but it is not to be denied, but that they had a greater regard to their Characters than to the Plot, which might have been better laid together, and more naturally unravell'd.

UPON OPERA'S.

TO THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM[1].

I HAVE long had a deſire to tell your Grace my thoughts of Operas, and to acquaint you with the difference I have obſerv'd betwixt the Italian and French way of ſinging. The occaſion I had of ſpeaking of it, at the Ducheſs of MAZARINE's, has rather increaſed than ſatisfied that deſire; therefore I will gratify it in the Diſcourſe I now ſend to your Grace.

I

[1] *George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who died in* 1687.

I ſhall begin with great freedom, and tell your Grace, that I am no great admirer of Comedies in muſick, ſuch as now-a-days are in requeſt. I confeſs I am not diſpleaſed with their magnificence; the Machines have ſomething that is ſurprizing; the Muſick, in ſome places, is charming; the whole together ſeems wonderful: but it muſt be granted me alſo, that this wonderful is very tedious; for where the Mind has ſo little to do, there the Senſes muſt of neceſſity languiſh. After the firſt pleaſure that ſurprize gives us, the eyes are taken up, and at length grow weary of being continually fix'd upon the ſame object. In the beginning of the Conſorts, we obſerve the juſtneſs of the Concords; and amidſt all the Varieties that unite to make the ſweetneſs of the harmony, nothing eſcapes us. But 'tis not long before the Inſtruments ſtun us; and the Muſick is nothing elſe to our ears but a confuſed ſound that ſuffers nothing to be diſtinguiſh'd. Now how is it poſſible to avoid being tir'd with the *Recitativo*, which has neither the charm of ſinging, nor the agreeable energy of ſpeech? The Soul fatigued by a long attention, wherein it finds nothing to affect it, ſeeks ſome relief within it ſelf; and the Mind, which in vain expected to be entertained with the ſhow, either gives way to idle muſing, or is diſſatisfied that it has nothing to employ it. In a word, the fatigue is ſo univerſal, that every one wiſhes himſelf out of the houſe; and the only comfort that is left to the poor ſpectators, is the hopes that the Shew will ſoon be over.

The reaſon why, commonly, I ſoon grow weary at Opera's, is, that I never yet ſaw any which appear'd not to me deſpicable, both as to the Contrivance of the ſubject, and the Poetry. Now it is in vain to charm the Ears, or gratify the Eyes, if the Mind be not ſatisfied; for my Soul being in better intelligence with my mind than with my ſenſes,

ſes, ſtruggles againſt the impreſſions which it may receive, or at leaſt does not give an agreeable conſent to them, without which, even the moſt delightful Objects can never afford me any great pleaſure. An extravagance ſet off with Muſick, Dances, Machines, and fine Scenes, is a pompous piece of folly, but 'tis ſtill a folly. Tho the embroidery is rich, yet the ground it is wrought upon is ſuch wretched ſtuff that it offends the ſight.

There is another thing in Opera's ſo contrary to Nature, that I cannot be reconciled to it; and that is the ſinging of the whole Piece, from beginning to end, as if the Perſons repreſented were ridiculouſly match'd, and had agreed to treat in muſick both the moſt common, and moſt important affairs of Life. Is it to be imagin'd that a maſter calls his ſervant, or ſends him on an errand, ſinging; that one friend imparts a ſecret to another, ſinging; that men deliberate in council, ſinging; that orders in time of battle are given, ſinging; and that men are melodiouſly killed with ſwords and darts? This is the downright way to loſe the life of Repreſentation, which without doubt is preferable to that of Harmony: for, Harmony ought to be no more than a bare attendant, and the great maſters of the Stage have introduc'd it as pleaſing, not as neceſſary, after they have perform'd all that relates to the Subject and Diſcourſe. Nevertheleſs, our thoughts run more upon the Muſician than the Hero in the Opera: LUIGI, CAVALLO, and CESTI, are ſtill preſent to our imagination. The mind not being able to conceive a Hero that ſings, thinks of the Compoſer that ſet the ſong; and I don't queſtion but that in the Opera's at the Palace-Royal, LULLI is an hundred times more thought of than THESEUS or CADMUS.

I pretend not, however, to baniſh all manner of ſinging from the Stage: there are ſome things which ought to be ſung, and others that may be ſung without treſpaſſing againſt reaſon or decency: Vows, Prayers, Praiſes, Sacrifices, and generally all that relates to the ſervice of the Gods, have been ſung in all Nations, and in all times; tender and mournful Paſſions expreſs themſelves naturally in a ſort of querulous tone; the expreſſions of Love in its birth; the irreſolution of a ſoul toſs'd by different motions, are proper matters for Stanzas, as Stanzas are for Muſick. Every one knows that the Chorus was introduc'd upon the Grecian Theatre, and it is not to be denied, but that with equal reaſon it might be brought upon ours. So far, in my opinion, Muſick may be allow'd: all that belongs to Converſation, all that relates to Intrigues and Affairs, all that belongs to Council and Action, is proper for Actors to rehearſe, but ridiculous in the mouth of Muſicians to ſing. The Grecians made admirable Tragedies where they had ſome ſinging; the Italians and the French make bad ones, where they ſing all.

Would you know what an Opera is? I'll tell you, that it is an *odd medley of Poetry and Muſick, wherein the Poet and Muſician, equally confined one by the other, take a world of pains to compoſe a wretched performance.* Not but that you may find agreeable Words and very fine Airs in our Opera's; but you will more certainly find, at length, a diſlike of the Verſes, where the genius of the Poet is ſo crampt; and be cloy'd with the ſinging, where the Muſician is ſpent by too long a ſervice.

If I thought my ſelf capable of giving counſel to Perſons of Quality, who delight in the Theatre, I would adviſe them to take up their old reliſh for good Comedies, where Dances and Muſick might be introduced. That would not, in the leaſt, hurt the

the Repreſentation. The *Prologue* might be ſung with an agreeable Accompaniement. In the *Intermedes*[2] ſinging might animate words, that ſhould be as the life of what had been repreſented. After the end of the Play the *Epilogue* might be ſung, or ſome Reflections upon the fineſt things in the Play; which would fortify the idea, and rivet the impreſſions they had made upon the Spectators. Thus you might find enough to ſatisfy both the Senſes and the Mind; wanting neither the charms of ſinging in a bare Repreſentation, nor the beauty of acting in a long continued courſe of Muſick.

It remains that I give you my advice in general for all Comedies, where any ſinging is uſed; and that is, to leave to the Poet's diſcretion the whole management of the Piece. The Muſick muſt be made for the words, rather than the Words for the muſick. The Muſician is to follow the Poet's directions; only, in my opinion, LULLI is to be exempted, who knows the Paſſions better, and enters farther into the heart of man, than the Authors themſelves. CAMBERT[3], without doubt, hath an excellent genius, proper for an hundred different ſorts of Muſick, and all well managed with a juſt ſymphony of Voices and Inſtruments: no *Recitativo* is better underſtood, nor better diverſified than his; but as to the nature of the Paſſions, and the quality of the Sentiments that are to be expreſſed, he ought to receive from the Authors thoſe lights which LULLI can give them; and ſubmit to be directed, when LULLI, thro' the ſtrength of his Genius, may juſtly be allowed to be the director.

Before

[2] *An entertainment of Muſick and Dancing between the Acts, which has no connexion with the Play.*

[3] *See an account of him in* M. de St. Evremond's Life, *under the year* 1678.

Before I put an end to my Diſcourſe, I will tell your Grace what a ſmall eſteem the Italians have for our Opera's, and how great a diſlike thoſe of Italy give us. The Italians, who apply themſelves wholly to the Repreſentation, and take a particular care in expreſſing things, cannot endure that we ſhould give the name of Opera to a mixture of Dances and Muſick, which have not a natural relation, or exact connexion with the Subject. The French, on the other hand, accuſtom'd to the beauty of their Entries, the delightfulneſs of their Airs, and charms of their Symphony, cannot endure the ignorance, or ill uſe of the Inſtruments in the Opera's of Venice, and are weary of a long Recitativo, which becomes tedious for want of variety. I cannot properly tell you what this Recitativo of theirs is; but I know very well that it is neither ſinging nor reciting; it is ſomewhat unknown to the Antients, which may be defined, *an aukward uſe of Muſick and Speech.* I confeſs, I have found things inimitable in the Opera of LUIGI, both for the expreſſion of the Thoughts, and the charms of the Muſick; but the common Recitativo was very tireſom, inſomuch that the Italians themſelves impatiently expected thoſe fine places, which in their opinion came too ſeldom. I ſhall in a few words ſum up the greateſt defects of our Opera's: one thinks he is going to a Repreſentation, where nothing will be repreſented; and expects to ſee a Comedy, but finds nothing of the ſpirit of Comedy.

So much I thought I might ſay concerning the different conſtitution of Opera's. As for the manner of ſinging, which we in France call *Execution* [4], I think, without partiality, that no Nation can juſtly vie with us. The Spaniards have admirable pipes; but with their warblings and ſhakings, they ſeem

[4] *In Engliſh,* Performance.

to mind nothing in their ſinging, but to out-rival the Nightingales. The Italian ſinging is either feign'd, or at leaſt forc'd: for want of knowing exactly the nature or degree of the Paſſions, they burſt out into laughter, rather than ſing, when they would expreſs any Joy; if they ſigh, you ſhall hear violent ſobs form'd in the throat, and not Sighs which unawares eſcape from the paſſion of an amorous heart; inſtead of a doleful tone, they fall into the loudeſt Exclamations; the Tears of abſence, are with them the downright weeping at a funeral; ſadneſs becomes ſo ſorrowful in their mouths, that they roar rather than complain; and ſometimes they expreſs a languiſhing paſſion, as a natural fainting. Perhaps there may be at preſent ſome alteration in their way of ſinging; and by converſing with us, they may be improved as to the juſtneſs of a neat Execution, as we are improved by them, as to the beauties of a ſtronger and bolder Compoſition.

I have ſeen Plays in England, wherein there is a great deal of muſick; but to ſpeak my thoughts with diſcretion, I could not accuſtom my ſelf to the Engliſh ſinging. I came too late to find a reliſh in that which is ſo different from all others. There is no Nation that affords greater Courage in the men, more Beauty in the women, nor more Wit in both ſexes. 'Tis impoſſible to have every thing; and where ſo many good qualities are ſo common, 'tis no misfortune that a good Taſte is a rarity there. 'Tis certain that 'tis very rarely to be found: but thoſe perſons that have it, poſſeſs it in as eminent a degree of niceneſs and perfection, as any in the world; being diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of their Nation, either by an exquiſite Art, or by a moſt happy Genius.

Solus

Solus Gallus cantat; none but the Frenchman ſings. I will not be ſo injurious to all other Nations, as to maintain what an Author has publiſh'd, *Hiſpanus flet, dolet Italus, Germanus boat, Flander ululat, & ſolus Gallus contat:* I ſhall leave theſe pretty diſtinctions with the Author, and only beg leave to back my opinion by the authority of LUIGI, who would not endure that the Italians ſhould pretend to ſing his Airs, after he had heard them ſung by NYERT, HILAIRE, and the little VARENNE. On his return to Italy, he made all the Muſicians of that Nation his Enemies, by ſaying openly at Rome, as he had ſaid at Paris, that to make fine Muſick, Italian Airs muſt come out of a French mouth. He made little account of our Songs, except thoſe of BOISSET, which he admired, as well as the conſort of our Violins, our Lutes, Harpſicords, and Organs: and how would he have been charmed with our Flutes, if they had been then in uſe? It is moſt certain, that he was much diſguſted with the harſhneſs of the greateſt Maſters of Italy, when he had once heard the ſweet touch, and agreeable manner of the French.

I ſhould be too partial, if I inſiſted only upon our advantages: therefore I muſt own, that no people have a ſlower apprehenſion both for the true ſenſe of Words, and for humouring the thought of the Compoſer, than the French. There are but few who leſs underſtand the quantity, and who with greater difficulty find out the pronunciation; but when, by long ſtudy, they have ſurmounted all theſe difficulties, and are Maſters of what they ſing, nothing comes near them. The ſame thing happens to us in our inſtrumental Muſick, and particularly in Conſorts, where we can pretend to nothing very ſure or juſt, till after an infinite number of Rehearſals; but when once we are perfect in

them, nothing can be ſo juſt and fine. The Italians, for all their profound skill in Muſick, bring their Art to our ears without any ſweetneſs. The French, not ſatisfied to take away from the skill the firſt harſhneſs that ſhews the labour of the Compoſition, find in the beauty of their Performance, as it were a charm for our Souls, and I know not what that touches; which they carry home to the very Heart.

I forgot to ſpeak to your Grace about *Machines*, ſo eaſy it is for a man to forget that which he would have laid aſide. Machines may ſatisfy the curioſity of ingenious Men, who love Mathematical Inventions, but they'll hardly pleaſe perſons of good judgment in the Theatre: the more they ſurprize, the more they divert the mind from attending to the Diſcourſe; and the more admirable they are, the leſs Tenderneſs and exquiſite Senſe they leave in us, to be touch'd and charm'd with the Muſick. The Antients made no uſe of Machines, but when there was a neceſſity of bringing in ſome God; nay, the Poets themſelves were generally laughed at for ſuffering themſelves to be reduc'd to that neceſſity. If men love to be at expences, let them lay out their Money upon fine Scenes, the uſe whereof is more natural and more agreeable than that of Machines. Antiquity, which expos'd their Gods, even at the gates, and chimney-corners; Antiquity, I ſay, as vain and credulous as it was, expoſed them, nevertheleſs, but very rarely upon the Stage. Now the belief of them is gone, the Italians, in their Opera's, have brought the Pagan Gods again into the world; and have not ſcrupled to amuſe men with theſe ridiculous vanities, only to make their Pieces look great, by the introduction of that dazzling and ſurprizing Wonderful. Theſe Stage Deities have long enough abuſed Italy: but the People there being happily

undeceived at laſt, are diſguſted with thoſe very Gods they were ſo fond of before, and have return'd to Plays; which, in truth, cannot pretend to the ſame exactneſs, but are not ſo fabulous, and which with a little indulgence, may paſs well enough with men of ſenſe.

It hath happen'd with us as to our Gods and Machines, what happens with the Germans as to our Modes and Faſhions: we now take up what the Italians have laid aſide; and as if we would atone for the fault of being prevented in the invention, we run extravagantly into a Cuſtom which they brought up prepoſterouſly. In truth, we cover the Earth with Deities, and make them dance in troops, whereas, they made them deſcend with diſcretion, and on the moſt important occaſions. As ARIOSTO carried too far the Wonderful of Poetry, by a vain profuſion of Fables, ſo we ſtrain even Fable it ſelf by a confuſed aſſembly of Gods, Shepherds, Heroes, Enchanters, Apparitions, Furies, and Devils. I admire LULLI, as well for the diverſion of Dances, as for what concerns the Voices and Inſtruments; but the conſtitution of our Opera's muſt appear very extravagant to thoſe who are true Judges of the Probable and the Wonderful.

Nevertheleſs, one runs a riſque of having his Judgment call'd in queſtion, if he dares declare his good taſte; and I adviſe others, when they hear any diſcourſe of Opera's, to keep their knowledge a ſecret to themſelves. For my own part, who am paſt the age and time of ſignalizing my ſelf in the world by the invention of Modes, and the merit of new Fancies, I am reſolv'd to ſtrike in with good Senſe, and to follow Reaſon tho in diſgrace, with as much zeal, as if it were ſtill in as great vogue as formerly. That which vexes me moſt at this our fondneſs for Opera's, is, that they

that they tend directly to ruin the fineſt thing we have, I mean TRAGEDY, than which nothing is more proper to elevate the Soul, or more capable to form the Mind.

After this long Diſcourſe, let us conclude, that the conſtitution of our Opera's cannot be more faulty than it is. But it is to be acknowledg'd at the ſame time, that no man can perform better than LULLI, upon an ill-conceiv'd Subject; and that it is not eaſy to out-do QUINAULT in what belongs to his part.

A

DISSERTATION

UPON THE WORD

VAST.

TO

The Gentlemen of the

FRENCH ACADEMY.

AFTER I had condemn'd my ſelf as to the word *Vaſt*, I was in hopes the world would have been ſatisfied with my Recantation: but ſince the Gentlemen of the Academy have thought fit to add their Cenſure to mine, I declare my Retractation was not ſincere, but the mere effect of Com-

Complaiſance; and a voluntary ſubmiſſion of my thoughts to thoſe of Madam MAZARIN. Therefore I reſume againſt them, that Reaſon which I quitted for her ſake, and which every well-bred man would take a pride to loſe to her.

We may diſpute with the Gentlemen of the Academy the privilege of regulating our Language, as they pleaſe. It doth not depend upon Authors to aboliſh old Terms becauſe they diſlike them, and to introduce new ones according to their own fancy. All the favour we can do them, is, to make them Maſters of Uſe, when Uſe does not contradict true Reaſon. Some Authors have refin'd Languages; on the other hand, others have corrupted them: ſo that a Man muſt have recourſe to good ſenſe to decide the matter. Never had Rome ſuch a ſet of noble Genius's, as at the latter end of the Republick: the reaſon is, becauſe there was then Liberty enough remaining amongſt the Romans, to give a due force to their minds; and Luxury enough to give them Politeneſs and Agreeableneſs. At this time, when the beauty of their Language was arriv'd to its higheſt pitch; when there was at Rome ſuch admirable men, as CESAR, SALLUST, CICERO, HORTENSIUS, BRUTUS, ASINIUS POLLIO, CURIO, CATULLUS, ATTICUS, and many others, whom I need not here cite, it was juſt to ſubmit to their opinions, and to receive their deciſions with docility. But when the Language came to be corrupted under the Emperors; when LUCAN came to be preferr'd to VIRGIL, and SENECA to CICERO, was any one oblig'd to ſubmit implicitly to the authority of theſe Gentlemen, who then ſet up for Wits? Is not PETRONIUS highly commended by all judicious perſons, for ridiculing the Eloquence of his time, for knowing the falſe Judgment of his age, and giving to CICERO, VIRGIL, and HORACE,

the praiſes which they deſerved? *Homerus teſtis & Lyrici, Romanuſque Virgilius, & Horatii curioſa fælicitas.*

Let us proceed from Latin Authors to the French. When NERVEZE'S [1] falſe Eloquence was admired, would not the Court have been obliged to any Man of good ſenſe, who would have undeceiv'd them? When COEFFETEAU charm'd all the world with his Metaphors, and *Main-maſt Sails of Eloquence* [2] were thought miraculous: when the florid Language of COHON [3], which had neither force nor ſolidity, pleas'd all the pretended Wits, and the would-be Criticks: when the affectation of BALZAC, that deſtroy'd the natural beauty of Thoughts, paſs'd for a majeſtick, noble Style; would it not have been an important ſervice to the publick, to withſtand the authority which theſe Gentlemen uſurp'd, and prevent the ill taſte that each of them differently ſet up in his own time?

I confeſs, that we have not the ſame right againſt the Gentlemen of the Academy. VAUGELAS, D'ABLANCOURT, PATRU, have brought our Language to its perfection; and I make no queſtion, but that our preſent Authors will keep it up in the ſame condition wherein the former left it. But if one day a falſe notion of Politeneſs ſhould make our Diſcourſe feeble and languiſhing; if out of too great a fondneſs for writing puny Tales and Novels, we ſhould ſtudy an affected eaſineſs, which is nothing elſe but Nature ill-copied; if too great an application to Purity, ſhould, at length, end in Drineſs; if, in purſuing always the ſame

[1] *Nerveze has publiſh'd a Volume of Moral Epiſtles, full of Bombaſt and Nonſenſe.*

[2] *An Expreſſion of Coëffeteau.*

[3] *A famous Preacher, afterwards Biſhop of Niſmes.*

ſame method of thought, we ſhould rob our Language of its fine turns; and depriving it of all ornament, ſhould make it barbarous, when we intend to render it natural: would it not be reaſonable then to oppoſe theſe Corrupters, who would ſubvert the good and true Style, to give us another inſtead of it, as little proper to expreſs noble Sentiments, as delicate Thoughts?

But what have I to do to recal what's paſt, or to foreſee what's to come? I acknowledge the Juriſdiction of the Academy; let them therefore decide, whether *Vaſt* be a word in uſe or no? So far as this comes to, I will ſubmit to their judgment: but to know the force and propriety of the word, to be ſatisfied whether 'tis an imputation, or an honour, they muſt give me leave to conſult Reaſon. This ſmall Diſcourſe will ſhew, whether I have a true notion of it, or no.

I maintain'd, that this term *vaſt Genius* [4], was taken in a good or bad ſenſe, according to the things which were join'd to it; that a Genius, *vaſt*, *admirable*, *piercing*, ſignified a wonderful Capacity; and that on the other ſide, a *Genius vaſt and immoderate*, was a Genius that loſt it ſelf in rambling Thoughts; in bright, but airy Ideas; in deſigns too great, and not at all proportion'd to the means that may render them ſucceſsful. This opinion, methinks, was moderate enough. I have now a mind to deny that *Vaſt* can ever be a commendation, and that nothing is capable of rectifying that quality. Great is a perfection in Minds: *Vaſt* always a defect. A juſt and regulated extent makes the Great; an immoderate Greatneſs the *Vaſt*. *Vaſtitas* ſignifies an *exceſſive*

[4] *M. de St. Evremond's Criticiſm relates to this French expreſſion,* Eſprit Vaſte, *which in Engliſh implys a* vaſt Genius, *a* vaſt Mind, *a* vaſt Soul, *a* vaſt Spirit, *&c.*

ceſſive Greatneſs. The *Vaſt* and the Dreadful, have a great affinity one with another: *Vaſt* things differ mightily from thoſe which make an agreeable impreſſion upon us. *Vaſta Solitudo*, is not one of thoſe Solitudes, that afford a delicious repoſe, that charm the misfortunes of the miſerable; 'tis a wild Solitude, where we are frighted with being alone; where we regret the loſs of Company; where the remembrance of loſt Pleaſures afflicts us, and the ſenſe of preſent Misfortunes torments us. A *vaſt Houſe* offers ſomething ghaſtly to the ſight: *Vaſt Apartments* never made any perſon deſirous of living in them: *Vaſt Gardens* cannot have either the agreeableneſs which is owing to Art, or thoſe graces which Nature produces: *Vaſt Foreſts* put us into a fright; the ſight loſes it ſelf in looking over *vaſt Plains.* Rivers of a reaſonable Greatneſs give us the proſpect of fine Banks, and inſenſibly charm us with the pleaſantneſs of their gentle Streams. Rivers too large, Over-flowings, and Inundations, diſpleaſe us by the noiſe and violence of their Billows, and our eyes cannot with any pleaſure behold their *Vaſt Extent.* Savage Countries that are uncultivated; Countries ruin'd by the deſolation of War; Lands forſaken and abandon'd, have ſomething of *Vaſtneſs*, which produces, as it were, a ſecret horror within us. *Vaſtus, quaſi vaſtatus: Vaſt*, ſignifies almoſt the ſame with *laid waſte, ſpoil'd*, and *ruin'd.* Let us paſs from Solitudes, Foreſts, Plains, and Rivers, to living Creatures and Men.

Whales and Elephants are call'd *Vaſtæ & immanes belluæ.* That which the Poets have feign'd moſt monſtrous, as the Cyclops, and the Giants, are nam'd *Vaſt:*

Vaſtoſque

Vaſtoſque ab rupe Cyclopas
Proſpicio [5].
Vaſta ſe mole moventem
Paſtorem Polyphemum [6].

Amongſt Men, thoſe who exceeded the ordinary ſtature, thoſe whom bigneſs or height diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt, were call'd by the Latins, *Vaſta Corpora.*

Vaſtus has obtain'd ſo far, as to be applied to Cuſtoms and Manners. CATO, who had otherwiſe ſo many good qualities, was a perſon *Vaſtis moribus*, according to the Romans. He had nothing of elegance in his Diſcourſe, nothing of Grace either in his Perſon or his Actions: a rough ſavage air attended all he did. The Germans, who at preſent are civiliz'd and poliſh'd in many places, lov'd, formerly, that every thing about them ſhould have ſomething of *Vaſtneſs.* Their Habitation, their Attendance, their Equipage, their Aſſemblies, their Feſtivals, *Vaſtum aliquid redolebant*; that is to ſay, they were pleas'd with an immoderate Greatneſs, wherein there was neither Politeneſs nor Ornament. I have obſerv'd, that the word *Vaſtus* hath four or five different ſignifications in CICERO, but all in an evil ſenſe: *Vaſta Solitudo* [7], *Vaſtus & agreſtis* [8], *Vaſta & immanis bellua* [9], *Vaſtam & hiantem orationem* [10]. The moſt uſual ſignification of *Vaſtus*, is, too ſpacious, too extended, too great, immoderate.

It

[5] Virg. *Æneid. Lib.* III. *℣.* 647, 648.
[6] *Ibid. ℣.* 656, 657.
[7] Cicer. *in Somn. Scip. Sect.* 6.
[8] *De Oratore Lib.* I. *Sect.* 25.
[9] *De Divin. Lib.* I. *Sect.* 24.
[10] *Rhetor. ad Herenn. Lib.* IV. *Sect.* 12.

It may be replied, that *Vaſte* in French, does not ſignify what *Vaſtus* may ſignify in Latin, in the full extent of its meaning. I confeſs it. But why ſhould it not keep the moſt natural, as well as *Liberty*, *Favour*, *Honour*, *Affliction*, *Conſolation*, and a thouſand words of the like nature keep theirs? Beſides, there is a reaſon for *Vaſt*, which cannot be pretended for the reſt; 'tis this, that we have never a French term that expreſſes fully and truly, what the *Vaſtus* of the Latins can expreſs: and ſurely we did not make it French to encreaſe the number of Words, which ſignify the ſame thing; but to give our Language a word which it really wanted. We think with more force than we expreſs our ſelves: ſome part of our thought always ſtays behind; we very ſeldom communicate it entirely; and 'tis by a ſpirit of Penetration, more than by the intelligence of Words, that we enter abſolutely into the conceptions of Authors. Nevertheleſs, as if we were afraid to underſtand aright the thoughts of others, or to have our own comprehended, we weaken thoſe very terms that would otherwiſe have force to expreſs them. But in ſpite of our ſelves, *Vaſt* will preſerve in French the true ſignification it has in Latin. We commonly ſay *too Vaſt*, as we ſay *too Inſolent*, *too Extravagant*, *too Covetous*, and 'tis the exceſs of a vicious quality: we don't ſay *Vaſt enough*, becauſe *enough* ſuppoſes ſomething juſt and reaſonable; whereas, as ſoon as a thing is *Vaſt*, there is an Exceſs, there is too much; *Enough* can never agree with it. Let us now examine particularly the *Vaſt Genius*, ſince that's the ſubject of the Queſtion.

That which we call *Genius*, *Mind*, or *Soul*, is divided into three Faculties, the Judgment, the Memory, and the Imagination or Fancy. The Judgment may be commended for being *ſolid*, *profound*, *nice* in diſcerning, *juſt* in defining; but, in my opinion,

nion, no man of good ſenſe will ever give it the quality of *Vaſt*. 'Tis a common expreſſion, that ſuch a one has a *Memory happy, faithful*, fit to receive and preſerve Images: but I never heard any one call it *Vaſt*, except once [11], and that too prepoſterouſly, in my opinion. *Vaſt* may be applied to an *Imagination* that rambles, that loſes it ſelf, that creates viſions and chimera's.

I am not ignorant, that ſome have pretended to praiſe ARISTOTLE, by attributing to him a *vaſt Genius*. They believ'd too, that this very epithet of *Vaſt*, was a great commendation to HOMER. We hear it often ſaid, that ALEXANDER, PYRRHUS, CATALINE, CESAR, CHARLES V. and Cardinal RICHELIEU, had a *vaſt Genius*, a *vaſt Soul*: but if we take the pains to examine them well, we ſhall find that their great Works, and their great Actions, ought to be aſcrib'd to the other qualities of their minds; and their errors and faults imputed to the predominance of *Vaſt*. They had ſomething of *Vaſtneſs*, I own it; but ſtill it was a vice in them, and a vice not to be pardon'd, but in conſideration of their Virtues. It is an error of our Judgment to value them for what cannot be excuſed but by indulgence. If they had not been almoſt always great, we ſhould not forgive them for being ſometimes *vaſt*. Let us come to an examination of their Works and Actions; let us aſſign to each quality the effects that really belong to it; and begin with the Works of ARISTOTLE.

His Treatiſe of *Poetry* is one of the moſt finiſh'd; but to what are owing ſo many judicious precepts, and ſo many juſt obſervations, but to the clearneſs of his Judgment? No body will ſay, that it was to his *vaſt Genius*. In his *Politicks*, which may ſtill ſerve

[11] *He means Patru.*

ſerve to guide Legiſlators, he ſhews himſelf wiſe, prudent, and skilful in regulating the different Conſtitutions of States: he was by no means *vaſt*. No Writer ever pierced ſo far as he into the heart of Man, as one may ſee in his *Morals*, and in his *Rhetorick*, in the chapter about the *Paſſions*. But this he perform'd as a Philoſopher, that knew how to make profound reflections, that had exactly ſtudied his own motions, and nicely obſerv'd thoſe of other men. Don't found the merit of *Vaſt* upon that, for it had no ſhare therein. ARISTOTLE ſhew'd properly a *vaſt Genius* in his *Phyſicks*, and to that we may truly aſcribe all his errors; by that he loſt himſelf in his Principles, in his own *Materia prima*, in the Heavens, in the Stars, and in the reſt of his falſe Opinions.

As for HOMER, he is admirable ſo long as he is purely human; juſt in his Characters, natural in his Paſſions, wonderful in knowing and expreſſing well what depends upon our Nature. When his *vaſt Genius* leads him to talk of the Gods, he ſpeaks of them ſo extravagantly, that PLATO baniſh'd him out of his Republick as a Madman.

SENECA was in the wrong to repreſent ALEXANDER as a raſh Adventurer, who ow'd his Grandeur to his Fortune. PLUTARCH ſeems, in my opinion, to have reaſon on his ſide, when he attributes the conqueſts of ALEXANDER to his Valour, more than to his good Fortune. In effect, conſider ALEXANDER at his firſt acceſſion to the Throne, and you will find, that he ſhew'd no leſs Conduct than Courage, in ſettling himſelf in the Dominions of his Father. A contempt of this Prince's youth, encourag'd his Subjects to rebel, and his Neighbours to take up arms againſt him; he puniſh'd the ſeditious, and vanquiſh'd the reſtleſs. When this ſtorm was over, his next ſtep was to get himſelf choſen General of the Greeks againſt

gainſt the Perſians; and theſe meaſures were ſo well concerted, that one could not have expected more juſt from the moſt conſummate Politician. Thus being choſen, he undertook the War; and made the Lieutenants of DARIUS, and even DARIUS himſelf, commit a thouſand faults, without making one himſelf. If the greatneſs of his Courage had not made him paſs for a raſh man, by the dangers to which he expoſed himſelf, his Conduct would have left us the idea of a wiſe and prudent Prince. I deſcribe him to you great and politick, in all the fine Actions he perform'd. But you muſt needs have him *vaſt*, and 'tis that ſingle quality that ſet him upon all his extravagant, prepoſterous undertakings. An unbounded deſire of Glory engag'd him in a very fooliſh War againſt the Scythians: an immoderate Vanity perſuaded him that he was the ſon of JUPITER. *Vaſt* extended as far as his Affliction, when it carried him to ſacrifice entire Nations to the Manes of EPHESTION. After he had conquer'd the great Empire of DARIUS, he might have been contented with the known world; but his *vaſt Mind* form'd the deſign of conquering another. As *vaſt*, he undertook his expedition into India, where his Army threaten'd to abandon him, and where his Fleet was near being loſt; from whence he return'd to Babylon, melancholy, diſturb'd, uncertain, diſtruſting both Gods and Men. Are not theſe noble effects of the *vaſt Soul* of ALEXANDER?

Few Princes ever had ſo *vaſt* a mind as PYRRHUS: his famous Converſation with CINEAS, which every one has heard of, is a ſufficient proof of it. His Valour and experience in War gain'd him frequent Victories: his *vaſt Spirit*, that puſh'd at all things, would not give him leave to accompliſh any one of them. He engag'd in enterprize upon enterprize, in war upon war, but without effect.

fect. Tho he was a Conqueror in Italy, in Sicily, in Macedonia, and wherever he came, yet his power was no where well eſtabliſh'd; his Fancy ſtill prevailing over his Reaſon, threw him upon new imaginary deſigns, that hindred him from making any advantage, even of good ſucceſs.

CATILINE is exclaim'd againſt as a deteſtable perſon: the ſame Character had been given of CESAR, if he had been as unfortunate in his undertaking, as the former was in his. It is certain, that CATILINE had as great Qualities as any of the Romans: a noble birth, courage, vigour of mind, ſtrength of body; *nobili genere natus, magna vi animi & corporis*, &c. He was SYLLA's Lieutenant, as well as POMPEY was; of a family much more illuſtrious than that of the laſt, but of leſs authority with the Party. After the death of SYLLA, his chief aim was to get thoſe employments in the Republick, which the other had the good luck to carry; and if nothing was too great for POMPEY's Intereſt to obtain, nothing was high enough for the Ambition of CATILINE to purſue. What was impoſſible, appear'd to him but extraordinary; and the extraordinary ſeem'd to him common and eaſy: *Vaſtus animus immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta cupiebat.*

By this you may ſee what a relation there is between a *Vaſt Soul*, and immoderate things. Good men condemn his crime, Politicians blame his undertaking as ill-contriv'd; for all thoſe that attempted to oppreſs the Commonwealth, except him, had the favour of the People, and the aſſiſtance of the Legions to ſupport them. CATILINE had neither one nor t'other of theſe ſupports; his Induſtry and his Courage ſupplied the place of every thing elſe in that great and difficult affair. He himſelf got together a body of Soldiers that had hardly any arms or ſubſiſtence; and yet theſe Troops, under all theſe diſadvantages,

diſadvantages, fought with as great obſtinacy as ever troops did. Every Soldier ſhew'd the audaciouſneſs of CATILINE in the fight, as CATILINE ſhew'd the capacity of a great Captain, and the ſtoutneſs of the braveſt and moſt reſolute Soldier. Never did man die with ſuch noble bravery and firmneſs. 'Tis difficult even for the beſt man to read this Battle, and be very much of the Republick's ſide againſt him; 'tis impoſſible not to forget his crime, and pity his misfortune. He might have ſecurely gotten a great power, without infringing the Laws: this ambitious man, ſo *vaſt* in his projects, always aim'd at Power, and at length engaged in that fatal Conſpiracy which proved his ruin.

Who was greater, or more dextrous than CESAR? What addreſs, what induſtry did he not diſcover, in ſending home that prodigious multitude of Switzers, who endeavoured to ſettle themſelves amongſt the Gauls? It requir'd as much prudence as valour to defeat and diſlodge the Germans, and he equally diſplay'd both thoſe talents. He ſhew'd an admirable dexterity in managing the Gauls, improving their private jealouſies to enſnare them by the help of one another. Something of *Vaſt*, that mingled with his noble Qualities, made him forſake his ordinary meaſures, to undertake the expedition of Britain. A chimerical Expedition, vain in regard of his reputation, and altogether unſerviceable to his intereſts! What ſtratagems did he not make uſe of, to remove the obſtacles that oppoſed his project of Sovereignty? he undermin'd the credit of all the good men that could ſupport the Republick. He made CICERO be baniſh'd by CLODIUS, who had been familiar with his Wife. He gave ſo much uneaſineſs to CATULLUS and LUCULLUS, that they left all buſineſs. He render'd the Integrity of CATO odious, and

the Greatneſs of POMPEY ſuſpected. He made the People riſe againſt the aſſerters of their Liberty. Thus you ſee how CESAR play'd his cards againſt the Defenders of the State. Let us conſider how he carried himſelf towards thoſe that aſſiſted him to overturn it. His inclination for factious perſons diſcover'd it ſelf in CATILINE's Conſpiracy: he was a friend to the latter, and a ſecret accomplice of his crime. He courted the friendſhip of CLODIUS, a man violent and raſh. He join'd intereſts with CRASSUS, who was rather rich, than a good Citizen. He made uſe of POMPEY's acquaintance to gain reputation: but as ſoon as 'twas thought high time to clip the wings of his authority, and to prevent the eſtabliſhment of his power, he left no ſtone unturn'd to ruin POMPEY. He ſecured ANTHONY on his ſide: he gain'd over CURIO and DOLABELLA: he retain'd to his ſervice HIRTIUS, OPPIUS, BALBUS, and all the ſtirring, buſy, bold, and daring; in ſhort, all that were capable of bringing about under him the ruin of the Commonwealth. Meaſures ſo fine and artificial; methods ſo ſecret and ſo delicate; actions all tending to one centre; ſo much diſſimulation, ſo many ſubtle fetches cannot be aſcrib'd to a *vaſt Soul:* his faults, his misfortunes, his ruin, and his death, can be imputed to nothing elſe. It was this *vaſt Mind* that hindred him from enſlaving Rome as he might have done, or from governing it as he ought. 'Tis this that gave him the thoughts of making war upon the Parthians, when it was more neceſſary for him to have made ſure of the Romans. At that uncertain critical juncture, when the Romans were neither Citizens, nor Subjects; when CESAR was neither Magiſtrate, nor Tyrant; when he violated all the Laws of the Republick, and could not ſet up his own; being perplexed, unſettled, loſt in *vaſt Ideas* of his imagin'd Grandeur;

deur; not knowing how to rule his thoughts, nor his affairs, he offended the Senate, and yet truſted the Senators; he abandon'd himſelf to faithleſs and ungrateful Men, who preferring Liberty before all virtues, choſe rather to murder a friend and benefactor, than to have a Maſter. Commend, Gentlemen, commend a *vaſt Soul*; it coſt CESAR both his Empire and his Life.

BAUTRU, who judg'd well enough of the merit of men, uſed to prefer CHARLES the fifth to all the men that Europe ever produced ſince the time of the Romans. I will not pretend to determine ſo nice a caſe, but I am inclin'd to believe, that his natural parts, his courage, his activity, his vigour, his magnanimity, and his conſtancy, made him more conſiderable than any Prince of his time. When he took upon him the Government of his Dominions, he found Spain revolted againſt Cardinal XIMENES who was Regent there, and whoſe ſevere humour, and intractable behaviour, were inſupportable to the Spaniards. CHARLES was oblig'd to go to Spain, and taking the management of the affairs out of the hands of XIMENES into his own, all the Grandees return'd immediately to their duty, and all the Cities to their obedience. CHARLES the fifth was more politick, or more fortunate than FRANCIS the firſt, in their competition for the Empire: FRANCIS was more rich and more powerful; CHARLES carried it by his Fortune, or by the ſuperiority of his Genius. The victory of Pavia, and the taking of Rome, put into his hands a King of France and a Pope: a triumph, that ſurpaſs'd all thoſe of the antient Romans. The great League of Smalcald was defeated both by his conduct, and his valour. He chang'd the whole face of affairs in Germany; tranſferr'd the Electorſhip of Saxony from one branch to another; I mean from FREDERICK, who

was diſpoſſeſs'd, to the Houſe of MAURICE, who had follow'd the victorious Party. Religion it ſelf was enſlav'd to victory; and received from the will of the Emperor the famous *Interim* [12], which will never be forgotten. But this *vaſt Soul* embraced too many things, to regulate any one in particular: he did not conſider that he could do more by others, than by himſelf; and at that very time when he thought he had ſubdued Rome and the Empire, MAURICE turning againſt him the Armies which he ſeem'd to command for his ſervice, was ſo near ſurprizing him in Inſpruck, that he forc'd him to fly in his ſhirt, and to retire in all haſte to Villach. It is certain, that CHARLES the fifth had great Qualities, and performed very great Actions; but this *vaſt Soul*, for which he is applauded, made him commit many errors, and brought many misfortunes upon him. To that are owing his fatal Undertakings in Africk, and ſeveral other deſigns, as ill projected as they were ill executed; to that are owing thoſe voyages and travels from Nation to Nation, wherein there was more fancy than real intereſt. 'Tis this *vaſt Soul*, that made the Spaniards call him a *Knight-Errant*, and gave an occaſion to thoſe that did not love him to look upon him as a greater Traveller than Conqueror. Admire, Gentlemen, admire if you pleaſe, the virtue of the *vaſt Spirit*: it turns the Hero into a Knight-Errant, and gives to heroical Truths the air of fabulous Adventures.

I could ſhew that this ſame ſpirit was the cauſe of all the misfortunes of the laſt Duke of BURGUNDY, as well as thoſe of CHARLES EMANUEL,

[12] *This was a kind of Regulation which Charles* V. *made in* 1548, *concerning the Articles of Faith which he would have to be generally embrac'd in Germany, till a Council had decided the matters in controverſy.*

NUEL, Duke of Savoy. But I am impatient to come to Cardinal RICHELIEU, to diſcover in his perſon the different effects of the Great and the *Vaſt*.

One may ſay of Cardinal RICHELIEU, that he had a very great Genius; and as it was Great, he brought extraordinary advantages to our Kingdom; but as it was ſometimes *Vaſt*, he brought us alſo to the brink of ruin. When he firſt came into the Miniſtry, he found that France was govern'd by the Counſels of Rome and Madrid. Our Miniſters receiv'd all the impreſſions that Cardinal MARQUEMONT [13] gave them; and the Pope manag'd this Cardinal, as the Spaniards manag'd the Pope. The King, who was as jealous of the grandeur of his Kingdom, as any King could be, deſign'd within himſelf to follow the true intereſt of it: the artifices of thoſe that govern'd, made him follow thoſe of ſtrangers; and if Cardinal RICHELIEU had not ſat at the helm, this Prince, who was naturally an enemy to Spain and Italy, had been a good Spaniard, or good Italian, in ſpite of his averſion. I will inſtance in a paſſage that's little known, but very true: Cardinal MARQUEMONT writ a long Letter to Cardinal RICHELIEU, concerning the buſineſs of the Valtoline; and to be in favour with this new Miniſter, he carefully inſtructed him in all the nice meaſures that a man ought to obſerve, when he has any thing to do with the Italians and Spaniards. Cardinal RICHELIEU, for an anſwer, ſent him four Lines, to this purpoſe:

The King hath chang'd his Council, and the Council their Maxims. An Army will be ſent to the Valtoline, which ſhall make the Pope more compliant, and oblige the Spaniards to give us ſatisfaction.

[13] *Denys Simon de Marquemont, Archbiſhop of Lions, then Ambaſſador of France at Rome, and afterwards raiſed to the Cardinalſhip.*

Monſieur DE MARQUEMONT was much ſurprized at the ſmartneſs of the Letter, and yet more to ſee the new ſpirit, that now began to inform the Miniſtry. As he was a man of parts, he alter'd the ſcheme of his conduct, and begg'd pardon of the Miniſter, for being ſo preſumptuous as to give him inſtructions, which himſelf ought to have received from him; acknowledging he was in an error to believe, that the Spaniards would be ever brought to a reaſonable Treaty, by a bare Negotiation. Monſieur DE SENECTERRE often ſaid, that this ſhort Letter of Cardinal RICHELIEU to Cardinal MARQUEMONT, was the firſt that let people into the ſecret of this Miniſter's deſign to pull down the power of Spain, and to reſtore to our Nation the ſuperiority it had loſt. But before any thing of importance could be undertaken abroad, it was neceſſary to be ſecure at home; and the Hugonot Party was ſo conſiderable in France, that it ſeem'd to compoſe another State within the State. This did not hinder RICHELIEU from reducing them. As the War had been unfortunately carried on in the Miniſtry of the Conſtable DE LUYNES, he was oblig'd to fall upon a new Scheme; and this produc'd effects full as happy, as the other had done the quite contrary. It was agreed on all hands, that Rochelle was the ſoul of the party: there it was that conſultations were held, and deſigns form'd: the intereſts of a hundred and a hundred Cities united there; and 'twas from thence, that a body compos'd of ſo many ſeparate Parties, receiv'd life and motion. Therefore there was nothing elſe to be done, but to take Rochelle, and when that fell, all the reſt muſt fall of courſe. But when the ſtrength of the place came to be conſider'd; when they thought on the vaſt numbers that would defend it; and the zeal of thoſe that would engage in its defence;

when

when they reflected how easy it was to relieve it; when they saw the Sea free, and consequently the gates open to strangers, then they believed that to be impregnable, which had never been taken. In short, all but Cardinal RICHELIEU despair'd of any possibility to reduce it. He was in hopes, and his hopes made him form the design of this great Siege. In the deliberation, all difficulties were removed; in the execution, all conquer'd. Men shall eternally remember that famous Dyke, that stupendous work of Art, which offer'd violence to Nature it self, and gave new bounds to the Ocean. They shall always remember the obstinacy of the Besieg'd, and the resolution of the Besiegers. To what end should we make a longer Discourse? Rochelle was taken, and it was hardly surrender'd, when a greater Enterprize call'd us abroad.

The Dukedom of Mantua coming by succession to the Duke of NEVERS, France had a mind to settle him there; and Spain raised an Army to prevent us. The Emperor, under pretence of securing his Right, but indeed with a design to serve Spain, march'd some Troops into Italy; and the Duke of SAVOY, who had embrac'd the interests of the House of Austria, had engaged to stop us at the passage of the Mountains, to give the Spaniards and Germans leisure to execute their Designs. So many oppositions were to no purpose: the Pass of Suza was forced; the Emperor's Army was entirely ruin'd; SPINOLA died with grief for not taking Casal; and the Duke of NEVERS being acknowledged Duke of MANTUA, remain'd in quiet possession of his Dominion. Whilst the Emperor's Army wasted it self in Italy, GUSTAVUS King of Sweden was engaged to enter Germany, where he won Battles, took Cities, and extended his Conquests from the Baltick-Sea to the very Rhine. He was growing too powerful for us, when he was

kill'd; and his death left the Swedes too feeble to ſupport our Intereſts. Here it was that Cardinal RICHELIEU ſhew'd the maſter-piece of his Politicks. He retain'd the Troops that were deſirous of marching home to Sweden: he confirm'd the good intentions of a young Queen not well fix'd in her Throne; and made himſelf ſo ſure of General BANIER, that the War was maintained under a new Reign, with as much vigour, as it had been under that great King. When the Duke of WEYMAR, and Mareſchal DE HORN had loſt the battle of Nortlinghen, Cardinal RICHELIEU redoubled his ſuccours; ſent great Armies into Germany; ſtopt the progreſs of the Imperialiſts, and gave the Swedes an opportunity to retrieve ther affairs in the Empire.

All this was perform'd by Cardinal RICHELIEU, as he was Great, Magnanimous, Wiſe and Reſolute. Now let us ſee what he did by his *vaſt Soul.*

The impriſoning of the Elector of Triers gave us an occaſion, or at leaſt a pretence, to declare War againſt the Spaniards; and this deſign was worthy of the great Soul of Cardinal RICHELIEU: but that *vaſt Spirit*, which ſome aſcribed to him, loſt itſelf in too many projects. He took ſuch falſe meaſures abroad, and gave ſuch ill orders at home, that our Affairs, in all likelihood, muſt have been ruin'd. The Cardinal entertain'd the moſt fantaſtical deſign that ever was form'd: which was, to attack Flanders behind, and to cut off its communication with Germany, by the means of the Maeſe. He imagin'd he might take Bruſſels, and reduce the Low-Countries at the ſame time. In order to that, he ſent an Army of thirty five thouſand men to join the Prince of ORANGE in Brabant. But inſtead of incloſing Flanders between the Maeſe and the Somme, he ſhut up our

Army

Army between the Fortreſſes of Flanders and thoſe on the Maeſe; inſomuch, that there were neither Proviſions nor Ammunition in our Camp: and without amplifying the matter, the Miſery was ſo great among us, that after we were oblig'd to raiſe the Siege of Louvain, defended by ſome Scholars only, the Officers and Soldiers return'd into France, not in a body like Troops, but ſtraggling, begging an alms for their Subſiſtence, like Pilgrims. See what the *vaſt Spirit* of the Cardinal produc'd by the fantaſtical project of joining the two Armies! This great Genius, whoſe thoughts were too diffuſed, took yet worſe meaſures the following Campaign. The Enemies forced the Count DE SOISSONS, who defended the paſſage of Bray, with an inconſiderable body. Having paſs'd the Somme, they made themſelves Maſters of the Field, took our Cities, which they found unprovided with all things; carried Deſolation as far as Compiegne, and Terror even to Paris. A fine commendation for Cardinal RICHELIEU, that his projects were *Vaſt!* The very quality, which the Gentlemen of the Academy value ſo highly, made him commit full as groſs faults in the Campaign of Aire. He undertook a great Siege in Flanders, at the ſame time that the Count of SOISSONS entred Champagne with an Army. Hardly had we taken Aire, but the Mareſchal DE LA MEILLERAYE was defeated, and the City beſieged by the Enemy. If the Count had not been killed after he had won the battle of Sedan [14], we might have expected the greateſt diſorder in the world, conſidering what a diſpoſition the People were then in. Had the Gentlemen of the Academy been particularly acquainted with Monſieur DE TURENNE, they would have plainly

[14] *Lewis de Bourbon, Count of Soiſſons, was kill'd at the Battle of la Marfée near Sedan, in* 1642.

plainly found that the *vaſt Spirit* of the Cardinal was by no means approved by him. That wiſe General admir'd a hundred qualities of this Miniſter, but he could not endure the *Vaſt*, for which he is commended. 'Twas that cauſed him to affirm, *That Cardinal* MAZARIN *was wiſer than Cardinal* RICHELIEU; *that the deſigns of Cardinal* MAZARIN *were juſt and regular; thoſe of Cardinal* RICHELIEU *greater, but not ſo well concerted, as being the product of too extenſive an Imagination.*

Theſe, Gentlemen, are ſome of thoſe Reaſons I had to offer to you againſt the word *Vaſt*. If I have not ſubmitted to the Judgment you have given in favour of Madam MAZARIN, 'tis becauſe I found in your Writings a cenſure of *Vaſt*, of much greater force than can be found in this Diſcourſe. And indeed you have given ſuch juſt bounds to your own Wits, that you ſeem yourſelves to condemn the Word you defend.

UPON FRIENDSHIP.

TO THE DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

OF all the Sayings of the Antients, which you have ſo judiciouſly obſerv'd, and ſo happily retain'd, none affects me more than that of AGESILAUS, when he recommends the affair of one of his

his Friends to another. *If* NICIAS, ſays he, *has committed no fault, ſet him at liberty; if he has, ſet him at liberty for my ſake: let the matter be how it will, ſet him at liberty.* Behold here, Madam, the force of Friendſhip! A King of the Lacedemonians, ſo upright, ſo virtuous, ſo ſevere; a King, who ought to give his Subjects examples of Juſtice, not only allows, but even commands Injuſtice, in an inſtance wherein his Friend is concern'd.

Had a private man acted as AGESILAUS did, there would be no wonder in the caſe. Private men are but too much fetter'd by the Laws of Civil Society; ſo that one of the greateſt pleaſures they can enjoy, is ſometimes to follow the dictates of Nature, and to indulge their own Inclinations. 'Tis with regret they obey thoſe that govern; and on the contrary, love to ſerve thoſe they are pleas'd with: but that a King, taken up with his greatneſs, ſhould renounce the adorations of the Publick, and derogate from his own Authority and Power, to deſcend to himſelf, and feel the moſt natural ſentiments of Humanity, 'tis what is not eaſy to apprehend, and which well deſerves our Reflections.

'Tis certain, one ought not to look on his Prince as his Friend. The great diſtance between Sovereignty and Subjection, does not admit that union of Affections, which is neceſſary to love well; and the power of a Prince, and the duty of Subjects, have in them ſomething oppoſite to the Tenderneſs that Friendſhip requires.

To exerciſe dominion without violence, is all that the beſt of Princes can do; to obey without murmuring, is all that can be required of the beſt of Subjects. Now Moderation and Docility have no great allurements: and thoſe two Virtues are not lively enough to raiſe inclinations, and kindle the ardour of Friendſhip. The ordinary intercourſe between Kings and their Courtiers, is generally an

intercourſe of Intereſt. Courtiers purſue fortune with Kings; Kings expect ſervices from Courtiers.

However, there are times, wherein either the fatigue of buſineſs, or the being diſguſted with pomp and magnificence, obliges Princes to ſeek in the purity of Nature, thoſe enjoyments which they cannot find in their Grandeur. Tired out with ceremonies, affected gravity, ſtate, and ſhew, they caſt about for thoſe natural Sweets, and endearments of Freedom, of which their condition deprives them. Perplexed and troubled with jealouſies and ſuſpicions, they look out, at laſt, for a boſom Friend, to whom they may open a heart, which they keep ſhut up to all the reſt of the world. The flattery of fawning Adulators makes them wiſh for a ſincere Friend; and this produces thoſe Confidents, who are call'd *Favourites:* thoſe perſons endear'd to Princes, with whom they eaſe themſelves of the burden of their ſecrets; and with whom they are pleas'd to enjoy all the ſweets, which a familiar intercourſe, and a free converſation may yield to intimate Friends.

But how dangerous are ſuch Friendſhips to a Favourite who is more ſollicitous of ſhewing his Love, than watchful on his conduct and behaviour! This Confident thinks to find a Friend, where he meets with his Maſter; and, by an unexpected turn, his familiarity is puniſh'd, as the indiſcreet freedom of a Servant who forgot himſelf. Thoſe Courtiers, whoſe conduct is ruled by their intereſt, find in their own induſtry wherewithal to make themſelves agreeable; and prudence makes them avoid whatever may be offenſive or diſpleaſing. He who truly loves his Maſter, only conſults his own heart and affection: he thinks himſelf ſafe in what he ſpeaks, and what he does, by what he feels within himſelf; and the warmth of an ill-govern'd

Friend-

Friendſhip cauſes his ruin, where the caution of thoſe who have not the ſame affection, would preſerve to him all the advantages of his fortune. Thus men generally loſe the favour of Princes, who are more careful of puniſhing what offends their Character, than eaſy to forgive what is done by an impulſe of Nature. Happy thoſe Subjects, whoſe Princes know how to excuſe what the weakneſs of human condition renders excuſable in Men! But let us not envy all thoſe who make themſelves dreaded: for they loſe the pleaſures both of loving and of being loved. Let us return to more particular conſiderations on Friendſhip.

I ever admir'd EPICURUS's Morals; and what I value moſt in his Morals, is, the preference he gives to Friendſhip, before all other Virtues. In truth, Juſtice is only a Virtue eſtabliſh'd for the ſupport of human Society; it is the work of Men, whereas Friendſhip is the work of Nature. Friendſhip is the only pleaſure of our Lives; when Juſtice, with all its rigors, can hardly make us ſafe. If Prudence makes us avoid ſome evils, Friendſhip alleviates them all: if Prudence makes us acquire ſome goods, 'tis Friendſhip gives a reliſh to the enjoyment of them. Have you occaſion for wholeſom Counſel, who can give it you but a faithful Friend? Who can you entruſt with your Secrets, to whom can you open your Heart, and unveil your Soul, unleſs it be a Friend? and how tireſom would it be for a man to be always cloſe confined within himſelf, without a Confident either of his affairs or pleaſures? Enjoyments ceaſe to be ſo, as ſoon as they are not communicated. *Even the heavenly Felicity would be tireſom, without the confidence of a Friend* [a]. I have obſerv'd, that devout Perſons who are moſt diſengaged from the world, and love God with the greateſt affection, love in God other devout

[a] *This is a Thought of one of the Antients.*

vout Perſons, that they may have viſible objects of their Friendſhip. One of the great Pleaſures which is found in loving God, is to be allow'd to love thoſe that love him.

I wonder'd formerly to ſee ſo many Confidents of both Sexes upon our Stage; but found, at laſt, that the uſe of them was very prudently introduc'd: for a Paſſion imparted to no body, proves oftener a tireſom conſtraint to the Mind, than an agreeable pleaſure to the Senſes. As an Amour cannot be made publick without ſhame, ſo it cannot be kept altogether ſecret without uneaſineſs: but with a Confident, a man is more ſafe in his conduct, his Uneaſineſſes are allay'd, his Pleaſures redouble, and all his Troubles diminiſh. Poets, who well know the conſtraint which attends a conceal'd Paſſion, make us talk of it to the Winds, to Rivulets, and to Trees; upon a belief, that 'tis better to ſpeak of what one feels, even with inanimate things, than to keep it too ſecret, and make one's own ſilence a ſecond Torment.

As I have no ſhining merit to boaſt of, I hope I may be allow'd to mention one, upon which men do ſeldom value themſelves; which is, the having gain'd the entire Confidence of my Friends; and the moſt ſecret perſon that ever I knew, was only reſerv'd with others, that he might be the more open with me. He conceal'd nothing from me, as long as we convers'd together; and he would, perhaps, have been glad of an opportunity to tell me every thing, when we were aſunder. The remembrance of ſuch an endearing Confidence is very ſweet to me; but the thoughts of the condition he is in, is ſtill more grievous. I have contracted a familiarity with my own Misfortunes, but never ſhall with his; and ſince I can beſtow nothing but ſorrow on his Diſgrace, no day ſhall paſs, but I ſhall grieve and lament it.

Such entire Confidences, admit of no manner of diſſimulation. *We uſe a great deal better an Enemy whom we openly profeſs to hate, than a Friend from whom we conceal any thing, or with whom we diſſemble* [a]: for, an enemy may, indeed, receive more hurt by our hatred, but a friend will ſuffer a greater injury by our diſſimulation. The latter is a vice which is not tolerated in civil Society: therefore, with more reaſon, ought it not to be ſuffer'd in private Friendſhips.

But to preſerve ſo precious a thing as Friendſhip, it is not enough to be upon one's guard againſt Vices, but one muſt be ſo even againſt Virtues, nay, againſt Juſtice it ſelf. The ſeverities of Juſtice do not conſiſt with the tenderneſſes of Friendſhip; whoſoever pretends to be juſt, is either conſcious he is already an ill friend, or inclin'd to be ſo. The Goſpel ſeldom recommends Juſtice, without recommending Charity at the ſame time; with deſign, in my opinion, to ſoften a Virtue which would be auſtere, and almoſt ſavage, but for the mixture of a little Love. Juſtice, blended with other virtues, is excellent; but all alone, without any mixture of good-nature, mildneſs, and humanity, it is more wild than the men it firſt brought together; and it may be ſaid, that it baniſhes all manner of ſweetneſs and agreeableneſs from the civil Society it has ſettled.

Friendſhip is not only apprehenſive of the rigour of Juſtice, but likewiſe of the profound reflections of Wiſdom, that keep us too much within our ſelves, when Inclination would carry us towards another. Friendſhip requires a fire that animates, and does not like circumſpections that ſtop it: it ought always to be abſolute miſtreſs of the fortunes, and ſometimes of the lives of thoſe it unites.

In

[a] *This is a Thought of one of the Antients.*

In this union of wills, different Opinions may, however, be allow'd: but diſputing, in ſuch a caſe, ought to be a conference in order to clear doubts, and not an exaſperating contention. A man ought not to ſtir up paſſion, where he only ſeeks for lights; and therefore Friends ought to avoid very claſhing Opinions in Religion. A man who ſubjects all to Reaſon, and one who depends wholly upon Authority, will hardly agree together. HOBBES and SPINOSA, who admit neither Prophecies nor Miracles, but upon a long and judicious examination, will have no great value for thoſe credulous people, who receive the *Revelations* of St. BRIDGET, and the *Legend of the Saints*, as Articles of Faith. I remember I have ſeen an eſtrangement among Devout perſons, becauſe ſome of them entertain'd too great apprehenſions from God's Juſtice, and others too large hopes from his Goodneſs.

I ſhould never have done, if I would explain whatever conduces either to eſtabliſh, or to deſtroy the confidence of ſuch Friendſhips. They cannot ſubſiſt without faithfulneſs and ſecrecy; for 'tis what makes them ſecure: but this is not ſufficient to render them agreeable and endearing. There muſt be, beſides ſafety, a certain union between two Souls, which is form'd by a ſecret charm, I cannot expreſs, and which is more eaſily felt than perfectly known. A familiar intercourſe with a beautiful, ingenious, and judicious Woman, would, in my opinion, make ſuch a union yet more agreeable, if one could depend on its duration. But when any thing of Paſſion mixes with it, diſguſt terminates confidence with Love; and if there be nothing but bare friendſhip, the ſentiments of friendſhip cannot hold it long againſt the motions of a Paſſion.

I have wonder'd a hundred times why the Fair Sex had been excluded from the management of publick Affairs; for I found ſome of them more

ſkilful and abler than men. I was, at length, ſenſible that this excluſion did not proceed either from the malice of envy, or any ſuggeſtion of private intereſt; nor yet from an ill opinion of their wit; but merely (I hope I may ſpeak it, as I mean it, without offence) becauſe one could not rely on their weak and unſteady affection, their heart being too much ſway'd by their natural frailty. *A Woman who may wiſely govern a Kingdom one day, will give herſelf a maſter the next, as one would not entruſt with the looking after a dozen of Hens*, to uſe Cardinal MAZARIN's own words. What would not Madam DE CHEVREUSE, the Counteſs of CARLISLE, and the Princeſs PALATINE, have brought about, had not they ſpoil'd by their affections, all they might have perform'd by their Wit[3]? The errors of the Heart, are far more dangerous than the extravagancies of the Imagination: theſe may, every one of them, be corrected by the Judgment; whereas our Affection inclines us to evil, and makes us adhere to it, in ſpite of all the lights of our underſtanding:

Video meliora, proboque,
Deteriora ſequor.

A very ingenious Woman[4] told me one day, that *ſhe return'd God thanks, every night, for her Wit, and pray'd him, every morning, to preſerve her from the follies of her Heart.* Oh LOT, Oh LOT[5], how little you are in danger from theſe follies! be thankful to God for your bright parts, and rely

[3] *See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *under the year 1676.*

[4] *Madam de l'Enclos.*

[5] *Charlotte de Naſſau, daughter of Lewis de Naſſau Lord of Beverweert, Ambaſſador extraordinary from the States General at the Court of England. She was ſiſter to the Counteſſes of Arlington and Oſſory, and to Meſſieurs d'Odyck, Auwerkerk,* &c.

on your ſelf for your Inclinations. I know ſome perſons, LOT, who have no great reaſon to thank God for your Wit. The little *Bouffette*, among the reſt, would willingly conſent that your Heart were ſomewhat diſorder'd, and your Judgment leſs free and independent.

Superior Genius, how pleas'd are your Vaſſals to admire in you ſo much Reaſon, and ſo much Beauty! what ſatisfaction it is to them to ſee you deſpiſe the tedious diſcourſes of Beauties; the fulſom Converſations about Commodes, new-faſhion'd Sleeves, and Indian Stuffs? How ſweet it is to ſee you abandon the falſe Gallantry of others, *Baſkets full of Ribbons*, and the genteel Cane of Monſieur DE NEMOURS[6]! Soul elevated above all other Souls, what pleaſure it is to ſee you make ſuch a noble uſe of what you have; ſo little regret what you had, and ſo little deſire what you have not!

Add, Madam, the merit of the Heart, to that of the Soul and Mind: defend that heart of yours againſt *officious Fops*[7]; thoſe buſy fellows, who are ever ready to ſhut a door or a window, to take up a glove or a fan.

Love does not injure the reputation of Ladies; but the ſlender merit of their Lovers diſgraces them. You'd do me wrong, Madam, if you thought me an enemy to Tenderneſs: for as old as I am, I ſhould be ſorry to be free from it. We love as long as we can draw breath. What I deſire in Friendſhip is, that Knowledge ſhould go before Affection; and that an eſteem juſtly form'd in the Mind, ſhould animate it ſelf in the Heart,

[6] *See* la Princeſſe de Cleves; *a Romance written by the Duke de la Rochefoucault, Madam de la Fayette, and M. de Segrais.*

[7] *Our Author calls them in French,* Rendeurs de petits ſoins, *an expreſſion taken out of* la Carte de Tendre, *in the firſt Tome of the Romance of* Clelia.

Heart, and receive there ſuch warmth as is neceſſary for Friendſhip, as well as Love. Love therefore, Madam; but love no objects but what are worthy of you. I contradict my ſelf here unawares, and forbid whatever I will allow. To give you ſuch a piece of advice, is to be more ſevere than Preachers in a pulpit, and leſs indulgent than Father Confeſſors.

If my wiſhes were accompliſh'd, you ſhould be ambitious, and govern thoſe that govern others [8]. Either become miſtreſs of the World, or remain miſtreſs of your ſelf; not in order to paſs tedious days in that ſad and melancholy Indolence, which ſome would trump up for Virtue; but to have an abſolute power over your affections, and over-rule your pleaſures.

Sometimes let Reaſon, with a ſov'reign ſway,
Controul all your deſires:
Sometimes let Reaſon to your heart give way,
And fan your warmeſt fires.

If Confidence be one of the greateſt comforts of life, enjoy the ſweetneſs of it both with your dear *LOT*; and with him whom you may be ſure you can truſt, as well as your ſelf.

[8] *See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *under the year* 1676.

A LETTER TO THE EARL OF ST. ALBANS[1].

NO company is ſo agreeable and good, but one time or other it muſt part: therefore, by a much ſtronger reaſon, a melancholy ſociety ought not to laſt for ever. As for ours, my Lord, 'tis the moſt doleful that ever was known. Since I have begun to play at Madam MAZARIN's, I have not had Spadillo ſix times; Baſto has come oftner to me, but 'tis a decoy that tempts me to play, and cauſes me to be beaſted. I draw none but Trays of Clubs or Spades, or Sixes of Hearts and Diamonds. However, my Lord, I return heaven thanks, when nothing but lamentations or murmurs might be expected from me. God be praiſed, I ſet a good example, and ſuch a one as your partner ought to ſet: however, it will, at long run, ruin my Affairs, and not mend yours; which made me ſay laſt night, like M. DE BELLEGARDE, *I pay and play no more, and do what I pleaſe*[2].

Let

[1] *Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, Lord Chamberlain to Queen Henrietta, Conſort of King Charles* I. *He dyed in* 1684.

[2] *M. de Bellegarde, maternal Uncle of Madam de Monteſpan, who was ſomewhat paſſionate and whimſical, uſed to ſay, when he*

Let us comfort our ſelves, my Lord, that we are in a better condition than thoſe that win our money; for 'tis better by much to ſuffer an injury, than to do it. Madam MAZARIN has an excellent hand at filching my *Fiſhes*, and dropping a Card out of the ſtock, when I play without taking in, with four Matadors in hand. I addreſs my ſelf to the Prince DE MONACO[3], who tells me very ſeriouſly, and with an air of ſincerity: *Upon my word, Monſieur* DE ST. EVREMOND, *I look'd another way.* Your friend the Marquis DE SAISSAC laughs much, and decides nothing; and Monſieur COURTIN declares that my hardſhips are great. But all the declarations of Monſieur COURTIN ſignify little or nothing. The Ambaſſador is as little regarded in this houſe, as he would be at the Exchange, if he went about to juſtify Sir ELLIS LAYTON[4] there. In this extremity I call heaven to witneſs, but heaven has no more credit than the Ambaſſador.

Come to town, my Lord, to maintain your own rights your ſelf; the Country was never made for ſuch as you. Let thoſe be diſguſted with the world, with whom the world is already diſguſted. But let thoſe perſons of worth and honour, who are beloved by it, ſtill continue in it. A man of honour and politeneſs ought to live and die in a capital City; and, in my opinion, there are but three capital Cities in Europe, Rome, London, and Paris. But Paris is no longer a place for your Lordſhip to live in; of the many friends you had there, ſome are

he was in ill luck, I pay and play no more; I do what I pleaſe; *which ſaying became proverbial among the other Gameſters his cotemporaries.*

[3] *The Prince of Monaco came over to England, in the year 1676.*

[4] *He was one of the Commiſſioners of Prizes, whom the Merchants charg'd with great miſdemeanors.*

dead, and the others are impriſon'd: Rome cannot ſuit with you; nor can the Diſciple of St. PAUL like a place, where St. PETER's ſucceſſor is the ſovereign: this goodly and great City, called London, daily expects you; and here, my Lord, you ought to fix your abode. Free converſations at table, with a few gueſts; a game at Hombre at her Royal Highneſs's [5], and Cheſs at home, will make you as eaſily wait the laſt period of life at London, as Monſieur DES YVETEAUX did at Paris. He died at eighty years of age, cauſing a Saraband to be play'd to him, a little before he expir'd, *that his Soul*, as he expreſs'd himſelf, *might ſlide away the eaſier* [6]: You'll not pitch upon Muſick to ſoften the hardſhips of that voyage. A Vole at Hombre, and three aces eldeſt hand againſt three nines at Crimpo, will determine your days with as great ſatisfaction. This will not happen the Lord knows when, if you come and live at London: but I'll not give you ſix months life, if you ſtay in the Country with thoſe melancholy thoughts you have taken up there.

A

[5] *The Dutcheſs of York.*

[6] *See the* Melanges d'Hiſtoire & de Litterature de Vigneul Marville, *Tom.* I. *p.* 154. *& ſeqq.*

A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I Have reſolv'd, Madam, to give you a piece of Advice, tho I am not unſenſible how little the Ladies care to receive any. But let the effect be what it will, I am too much concern'd for your Beauty, not to inform you, that you'll injure it extremely, if you ſhould put on fine clothes on the Queen's birth-day. Let others of your ſex make uſe of Ornaments: theſe are artificial Beauties that ſerve them inſtead of the natural; and we are oblig'd to 'em for gratifying our eyes with ſomething more agreeable than their own perſons. But ſhould you follow their example, we ſhould not have the ſame obligation to your Grace. Every ornament that is beſtow'd upon you, hides a charm; as every ornament that is taken from you, reſtores you ſome new grace, and you are never ſo lovely, as when we behold nothing in you but your ſelf.

The greateſt part of the Ladies are very advantageouſly loſt under their dreſs. Some women look well enough with a pearl-necklace, that would make a very ſorry figure with their bare necks. The richeſt necklace in the world, would have an

ill effect upon you, it would make ſome alteration in your perſon, and every alteration that happens to a perfect Beauty, cannot be an advantage to it. Thoſe who keep your Jewels from you, are better friends to your beauty than you may imagine. I am more your humble ſervant than any man; but as much your humble ſervant as I am, there are ſome days, when I can find excuſes for Meſſieurs COLBERT and DU METZ[1]. Were you in the condition you ought to be in, it would not be ſo eaſy to diſtinguiſh the advantages of your perſonal merit, from thoſe of your fortune. Thoſe Gentlemen ſave us that trouble: thanks to the care they have taken to ſeparate thoſe two things; we plainly ſee you are oblig'd to none but your ſelf for all the tender ſentiments men have for you. Let others lay out all they are worth in Jewels and fine Clothes; Nature has been at all the expence: and as you would be ungrateful, ſo we ſhould betray an ill taſte, ſhould we not be equally content with that profuſion of gifts ſhe has heap'd upon you.

I would counſel you, Madam, to take the ſame meaſures on her Majeſty's Birth-day, which the famous BUSSI D'AMBOISE formerly obſerved at a Tournament. Being inform'd before-hand that all the Noblemen of the Court deſign'd to put themſelves to an extraordinary expence in their Equipage and Clothes, he order'd his Retinue to be dreſs'd like Lords, and appear'd himſelf in the plaineſt dreſs in the world, at the head of ſo rich a train. The advantages of Nature were ſo conſpicuous in the perſon of BUSSI, that he alone was taken for a great Lord, and the other Noblemen, who rely'd ſo much upon the magnificence of their habits,

[1] *M. Colbert, and M. du Metz Keeper of the Royal Treaſury, had in their cuſtody the Dutcheſs of Mazarin's Jewels.*

habits, paſs'd but for Valets. Govern your ſelf, I beſeech you, Madam, by the example of BUSSI: let FANCHON and GRENIER [2], be attir'd like Dutcheſſes; but as for your ſelf, appear in the ordinary dreſs of a country Nymph, with nothing but the charms of your Beauty to recommend you: all the Ladies will be taken for FANCHONS, and the plainneſs of your habit will not hinder you from out-ſhining all the Queens in the univerſe.

I have no great inclination to tell ſtories, which perhaps is nothing but the effect of an ill-grounded Vanity, that makes me prefer the expreſſing of what I imagine, to the reciting of what I have ſeen. The profeſſion of a Story-teller ſits but aukwardly upon young people, but is downright weakneſs in old men. When our mind is not arrived to its due vigour, or when it begins to decline, we then take a pleaſure in telling what does not put us to any great expence of thought. However, I will for once renounce the pleaſure which I generally take in my own Imagination, to entertain you with a ſmall Adventure, of which I was an eye-witneſs at the Hague.

During my reſidence in that place, the fancy took, one day, the Count DE GUICHE [3], and Monſieur DE LA VALIERE [4], to draw the eyes of the ſpectators after them: to put which noble deſign in execution, they both reſolv'd that their Dreſs ſhould have all the magnificence which this part of the world was able to afford, and, at the ſame time, diſcover the nicety of their inventions. The Count diſtinguiſh'd himſelf by a thouſand ſingularities: he had a tuft of feathers in his hat, which

[2] *Two Waiting-women of Madam Mazarin's.*

[3] *Armand de Grammont, who died towards the end of the year 1672.*

[4] *Brother to the Dutcheſs of la Valiere.*

which was button'd up by a buckle of Diamonds, that he could have wiſh'd to have been larger, for this occaſion. He wore about his neck ſome Point de Veniſe, which was neither a Cravat nor a Band; but a ſmall Ruff, that might gratify the ſecret inclination he had contracted for the *Golilia*, when he liv'd at Madrid. After this, Madam, you would expect to find him in a Doublet, after the Spaniſh manner; but, to your ſurprize, I muſt tell you, it was an Hungarian Veſt. Next, the ghoſt of Antiquity haunted his memory; ſo he cover'd his legs with Buſkins, but infinitely ſprucer and genteeler than thoſe the antient Romans uſed to wear; and on which he had order'd his Miſtreſs's name to be written in letters that were extremely well deſign'd, upon an embroidery of pearls. From his Hat down to his Veſt, he had ſquar'd himſelf by the odd fancy of the Admirante of CASTILE; Count DE SERINI, was conſpicuous in the Veſt; and the idea of SCIPIO had made him put on Buſkins. As for LA VALIERE, he had apparell'd himſelf after as extraordinary a manner as he poſſibly could, but he follow'd too much the French way, and could not raiſe himſelf to the perfection of fantaſticalneſs.

This was the equipage of our Gentlemen, when they made their appearance in the Voorhout, which is the place where Perſons of Quality uſe to take the air at the Hague. They had ſcarce enter'd it, when multitudes ran from all hands to gaze and ſtare at them; and as every body was ſurpriz'd at the novelty of the thing, they were at firſt puzzled, whether to admire it as extraordinary, or to laugh at it as extravagant. In this ſhort uncertainty of thought, Monſieur DE LOUVIGNY[5] arriv'd in the

[5] *Anthony Charles de Grammont, Count de Louvigny, ſince Duke of Grammont.*

the place, and put a ſtop to their grave contemplation. He wore a plain black ſuit, and clean linnen made up the reſt: but then he had the fineſt head of hair, the moſt agreeable face, and the genteeleſt air that can be imagin'd. His modeſt deportment ſilently inſinuated the merits of all his excellent Qualities: the Ladies were touch'd, and the Men were infinitely pleas'd. Were it not for you, Madam, the queſtion would be ſoon decided, and the advantages of your ſex loſt for ever. You are the only Woman in the world, who are able to make ſtronger impreſſions. Having thus deſcrib'd his Charms to you, 'twill be no difficult matter for you to gueſs the effects of them. In ſhort, Madam, all the ſpectators were as much affected, as the poor Count and his friend were mortified, to their great diſappointment. People ſtill remember at the Hague how triumphantly Monſieur DE LOUVIGNY came off, and ſtill make ſport with telling the ill ſucceſs of the other two Gentlemen. If I were not in England, I ſhould often think on this adventure: but, Madam, you deſtroy all objects and all ideas; you would eclipſe a thouſand MIDDLETONS, and a thouſand LOUVIGNYS. What has either ſex left to oppoſe to your Charms?

FOR

FOR MADAM

DE BEVERWEERT[1].

WE were ſcarce got three miles from Euſton[2], before we heartily repented our leaving it. The beauty of the Place; the agreeable manner of living there; the merit and obliging temper of the Maſter and Miſtreſs of the houſe; the Charms of the *beautiful Egyptian*; the indearing Qualities of the fair Indifferent, for whom 'tis impoſſible for any one that ſees her to be indifferent; ſhe whom we always behold with pleaſure, and whom we always hear with admiration, that Wit ſo lively and ſo juſt, that Humour ſo gay and free, with a conduct ſo juſt and regular: all theſe Perſons, all theſe things preſented themſelves to our imaginations, and convinc'd us, to our ſorrow, that happineſs is leſs known, and leſs valued when poſſeſs'd, than when loſt.

Theſe melancholy thoughts had lull'd the Ambaſſador of Portugal [3] aſleep, out of ſympathy, perhaps, with Madam DE BEVERWEERT, who never ſleeps ſo ſoundly, as when ſhe is in deep affliction. As the Conſtitutions of people are different, my concern kept me awake to reflect on what we had loſt. I entertain'd for ſome time theſe ſad thoughts, which were not diſagreeable; but one whimſy

[1] *See above pag.* 209.
[2] *The Earl of Arlington's Country-ſeat in Suffolk.*
[3] *Don Franciſco, Count de Melos.*

whimsy ushering in another, I found my self at last in one of DON QUIXOT's Fits; and being seiz'd, all on a sudden, with the spirit of Chivalry, I cried out with a loud voice, *Ye Knights of Suffolk, ye Palmerins of Bury*[4], *come and confess to the Knight of the Tagus, and the Norman* DON QUIXOT, *that all the* Oriana's *and* Angelica's *in the world, are not worthy to carry the slippers of the most incomparable* Carolina *of Euston.*

Transported as I was, and really more a DON QUIXOT than DON QUIXOT himself, I saw a brace of Higlers coming upon the Road, whom I immediately took for two Knights. They had both of them Cudgels in their hands, which I fancied to be Lances, as I did their Caps, which were slouch'd down, like that of my Lord TOWNSHEND, to be Helmets, with the Viser down. This Equipage, which I mistook for a warlike preparation, made me conclude, that Blood and Battle would soon ensue; for which reason, I thrice cried out, as loud as I was able, SANCHO, SANCHO, *saddle Rozinante, and get Grizzle ready.*

The Doctor[5], who was behind the Coach, imagining that I call'd him, leapt down immediately, and ask'd me what I wanted. *Saddle Rozinante,* SANCHO, *with all expedition, for lo! a new Adventure offers it self.* The honest Doctor thought, that being weary with riding in the Coach, I had a mind to ease my self on Horseback: upon which, he told me, *That they had not even Horses enough for his Excellency's use.* This answer of the Doctor brought me to my self again, and the Dreams of Knight-Errantry which had got into my head, beginning to vanish, the *Knight of Tagus* came by degrees to be the *Portugal Ambassador*, the *Norman* DON

[4] *A Town in Suffolk.*

[5] *One of the Earl of Arlington's Footmen, so nick-nam'd.*

DON QIXOT changed to ST. EVREMOND; and the brace of Higlers paſſed quietly by us, with their Cudgels and Caps.

I muſt needs own, that I made no great ſacrifice to Madam DE BEVERWEERT, when I loſt my Reaſon for the love of her. The little I had to part with, made the loſs inconſiderable. That indeed of the Ambaſſador was important, and accordingly he husbanded it much better than I did mine; and you'll find by what I am going to tell you, that he preſerv'd it as ſerene and compos'd, as if he had been altogether unconcern'd.

Coming to a River-ſide, whoſe Waters were ſwell'd by the exceſſive Rains that had fallen a little before, I repreſented to him with what eaſe he might put in execution what Mademoiſelle DE LA ROCHE[6], in a Copy of Verſes, once deſir'd of him, as a proof of his Paſſion; which was nothing in the world elſe, but only to take a civil leap into the Water, and drown himſelf, in order to gain the reputation of an amorous Heroe. "If my "Paſſion for Madam DE BEVERWEERT, *ſaid* "*he to me*, was diſhonourable or baſe, I would "never ſcruple to drown my ſelf in ſuch a naſty "puddle as this: but all my Deſires are pure and "innocent; ſo that if ever the whim takes me to "drown my ſelf, I am reſolv'd it ſhall be in clear "and fair Water, that may bear ſome reſemblance "to the purity of my Thoughts." *My Lord*, ſaid I to him, *if you are not to drown till you find out Water as clear as your Underſtanding, we ſhall not, in all probability, loſe you this good while.*

We paſs'd the River with theſe ſorts of Diſcourſes, when CHARLES appear'd, and gallop'd towards

[6] *Mademoiſelle de la Roche Guilhen, was then Governeſs to the Earl of Arlington's only Daughter, who was afterwards married to the Duke of Grafton. Mademoiſelle de la Roche is the Author of ſome French Tranſlations, and of ſeveral Romances.*

towards us with ſo good a grace, that one would ſooner have taken him for a Knight who was entring the liſts in a tournament, than for a Lackey, who came to give us an account of his Errand. I muſt own, indeed, that his Eloquence was ſomewhat confus'd when he came to deliver himſelf; for after he had ſputter'd out, *My Lord*, *Mr.* JERMYN, *Bury*, my Lord CROFTS, and *Chively*, ſome thirty times, all we could pick out of his incoherent Speech was, that CHARLES had found no body at home.

If my concern for leaving ſo delicious a place as Euſton, could have given place to any other vexation, it would have been a great mortification to me, to ſee the ill ſucceſs of my Letters, but one thing only could then affect me. So I e'en left it to the care of my Lord Ambaſſador to make ſerious reflections upon the abſence of Mr. JERMYN.

We laid aſide all thoughts of going to Chively, imagining that Mr. JERMYN [7] was not there, when we found one of his Servants at New-Market, who brought me a Letter from him. This inform'd us, that being acquainted, after his return from Bury, with our deſign of making him a viſit, he conjur'd us to do him that honour, and not to fail him. Accordingly, we went thither, and were very kindly receiv'd, by a Perſon, who tho he has taken his leave of the Court, has carried the civility and good taſte of it into the Country.

While my Lord Ambaſſador was admiring the Grove, the Gardens, and the Wall-trees; while he was commending the Stables, plucking down this Wall, finiſhing the Houſe, and contriving a better entrance

[7] *Henry Jermyn, created Baron of Dover in the year 1685. He dyed in 1708. Chively was his Country-Seat, within two miles of New-Market.*

entrance to it, I fanſied Madam DE BEVERWEERT playing at Billiards, or at Hombre; and ſometimes methought I ſee her put a Pearl in the ear of a certain Knight, as a proper ornament for a perſon of his gallantry, and which might heighten the merit of his agreeable Civilities.

After we had been treated with a noble Dinner, to which I brought more ſpeculation than appetite, we were oblig'd to take our leaves of our Hoſt, and purſue our intended Journey. My Lord Ambaſſador at our coming out of the Grove, reſum'd the affliction he had laid aſide for ſome minutes, and I continued that which I had not quitted. 'Twas nothing elſe but melancholy; and the fit was ſo ſevere, that the worſt Road, and the worſt Weather in the world were not able to increaſe it.

The tireſomneſs of Audley-End [8] made a greater impreſſion upon me. That vaſt and ſolitary houſe increas'd my melancholy, and ſo diſcompos'd the Count DE MELOS, that he was ſcarce able to commend the Gallery, find fault with the Apartments, and make his critical reflections upon the Garden. Then I thought it was a proper time to make a ſecond attempt upon him; and to omit nothing that lay in my power to cure the Deſpair of my friend, I civilly propos'd to him to hang himſelf on one of thoſe tall and melancholy Trees, which according to Madam BEVERWEERT, reſembled my Lord SUFFOLK: but I found that the Ambaſſador had got the aſcendant over the Lover, and that the Count was a Politician fit to negotiate Affairs at Nimeguen [9], rather than a deſperate Lover, who was reſolv'd to put a tragical concluſion to the

[8] *A Country-ſeat belonging to the Earl of Suffolk.*

[9] *Count de Melos was then lately named by the King of Portugal, his Ambaſſador Plenipotentiary at the Treaty of Nimeguen.*

the violence of his Paſſion. Perhaps the Count DE MELOS would not die of grief in her abſence, becauſe he was reſolved to die of joy when he ſaw her at his return. Perhaps, he hopes that after he has given peace to Europe, Madam DE BEVERWEERT will not refuſe to give him that happy repoſe which his long ſervices ſo well deſerve. As for my ſelf, I am reſolv'd to live, I own it frankly, and would be glad with all my heart to live for ever, that I might for ever adore and ſerve Madam DE BEVERWEERT.

A

LETTER

TO MADAM

DE BEVERWEERT.

I Have made but a ſorry apology with you, for the wrong uſe I made of the title we had to his Excellency's life. If you would be contented with the death of an ordinary perſon, I would offer you mine, that you might order Mademoiſelle LA ROCHE to diſpoſe of it as you think fit: but my death is not worth the notice. I am inconſiderable in every thing: a ſmall Gameſter with Madam MAZARIN; a little Mortal with you, unworthy even to die in your ſervice. I will therefore live, and join my reſentment with yours, to revenge you upon the Ambaſſador, and thereby vindicate and

retrieve the honour of your Charms. I entertain no longer any hopes from the Rivers or Trees of Audley-End. His Excellency is not an Excellency that will either drown, or hang himſelf: he fattens upon your hard uſage; and your indifference gives him ſo ſtrong and firm a gate, that I find in him a ſufficient ſtock of health to conclude four Treaties of general Peace, inſtead of one [1]. If you continue to uſe him ill, he will be in a condition to bury all the Plenipotentiaries at Nimeguen: *ma laſciate far a me, ſon furbo*; and I will ſhew a trick to reduce Count DE MELOS to a moſt lamentable condition. I have obſerv'd that your Cruelties prolong his life: take a contrary courſe, and kill him with Kindneſs. I remember a certain Amour wherein his Excellency was happy: but he did not mock the favours of the fair Lady, as he does your rigors; for he had ſuch a fit of ſickneſs upon it, that his Phyſicians had much ado to reſtore his health. When one has good Patterns to go by, it is no difficult matter to manage aright: I adviſe you, Madam, to ſquare your conduct by this example; and never believe me more, if four days good uſage don't put off the Ambaſſador's journey to Nimeguen, more effectually than the oppoſition of the Spaniards, and of all the Confederates together, could do.

A

[1] *Count de Melos was extremely lean; and ſo flagger'd as he walk'd, that one would have thought he was going to fall at every ſtep he ſet. He died at London at the time he was preparing to croſs the ſea to repair to Nimeguen.*

A

DEFENCE

Of ſome Dramatick Pieces of M. CORNEILLE.

TO

M. DE BARILLON[1].

I Never doubted your inclination to Virtue: but did not believe you ſo ſcrupulous, as not to bear with RODOGUNA upon the Stage, becauſe ſhe would ſuggeſt to her Lovers the deſign of putting their Mother to death, after their Mother had endeavour'd to perſuade her Children to kill their Miſtreſs. I beſeech you, Sir, to forget the lenity of our Temper, the innocency of our Morals, the humanity of our Politicks, that you may conſider the barbarous Cuſtoms, and criminal Maxims of Eaſtern Princes. When you have reflected, that in all royal families of Aſia, Fathers make away with their Children upon the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion; that Children put their Parents to death, thro' an impatience of aſcending the Throne; that Huſbands kill their Wives, and Wives poiſon their Huſ-

[1] *Ambaſſador Extraordinary from France to King Charles* II.

bands; that Brothers make nothing of murdering Brothers: when, I say, you have consider'd so detestable a Custom, establish'd among the Kings of those Nations, you'll not wonder so much at RODOGUNA's endeavouring to revenge the death of her Husband upon CLEOPATRA, secure her life, recover her liberty, and advance a Lover to the Throne, by the destruction of the most wicked Woman that ever lived. CORNEILLE has given the young Princes all the affection they ought to have for the best of Mothers; and has made the young Queen take such resolutions as the necessity of her Affairs required.

You'll say, perhaps, that such Crimes may be committed in Asia, but ought not to be represented in France. But what reason induces you to deny our Theatre to a Lady, merely for advising a crime for her own safety, while you grant that favour to those who committed the same Crime, without any provocation? Why should we banish RODOGUNA from our Stage, and admit upon it with applause ELECTRA and ORESTES? why should ATREUS be suffer'd to serve up to THYESTES his own Children in a feast? or NERO to poison BRITANNICUS? Why should HEROD, King of the Jews, the people whom God loved, be allow'd to put his wife to death; or AMURAT to strangle ROXANA and BAJAZET? And to pass from the Jews and Turks to the Christians, why should PHILIP II, the most Catholick Prince, be suffer'd to put DON CARLOS to death upon a suspicion not clearly made out? One of the most diverting *Novels* [2] we have in French, has reviv'd the memory of a thing almost bury'd in oblivion, and has produc'd a Tragedy [3] in England,

[2] Don Carlos Nouvelle Historique, *by the Abbot of St. Real.*
[3] *Written by Mr. Otway.*

land, whoſe ſubject has pleas'd all Engliſhmen. RODOGUNA, that poor oppreſs'd Princeſs, has not deſired the committing of a Crime for the crime-ſake; but only her ſafety, which could not be eſtabliſh'd but by a Crime: tho after all, this was more a Crime, with reſpect to a *Monk*, than with reſpect to an *Ambaſſador*; a Crime which MACHIAVEL would have accounted a political Virtue, and which the wickedneſs of CLEOPATRA may well make paſs for a piece of Juſtice lawfully adminiſter'd.

One thing which you found great fault with, was, that a young Princeſs ſhould be made capable of ſo vigorous a Reſolution. I am not well acquainted with her age: but I know ſhe was a Queen, and a Widow; and either of theſe qualities is ſufficient to make a Woman lay aſide ſcruples, at any age. Spare, Sir, ſpare, I beſeech you, RODOGUNA. The world will furniſh us with greater Crimes than hers, wherein you may make a better uſe of the virtuous abhorrence you have for villainous Actions.

To the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

II. METhinks RODOGUNA is pretty well juſtified; let's do the ſame ſervice to EMILIA, with reſpect to Madam MAZARIN. Suſpend your Judgment, Madam, EMILIA is not guilty of any great Crime for expoſing CINNA to the danger of a Conſpiracy. Condemn her not, leſt you condemn your ſelf: 'tis by your own ſentiments I deſign to defend hers, and by HORTENSIA to juſtify EMILIA.

EMILIA had ſeen her Family proſcrib'd; her Father murder'd: and what was yet more inſupportable to a Roman Lady, ſhe ſaw the Republick ſubdued by CESAR AUGUSTUS. The thirſt of Revenge, and the deſign of reſtoring Liberty, made her look out for friends, to whom the like injuries might inſpire the ſame ſentiments; and whom the ſame ſentiments might unite in the deſtruction of an Uſurper. CINNA, a Nephew of POMPEY, and the only remainder of that great family, who had periſh'd in the cauſe of the Commonwealth, join'd his reſentments with thoſe of EMILIA; and both being animated by the remembrance of their reſpective Wrongs, as well as by the intereſt of the Publick, form'd together the bold ſcheme of that illuſtrious and celebrated Conſpiracy.

In the Conferences that were held for carrying on this deſign, their hearts united, as well as their minds: but 'twas only in order to add vigour and life to the Conſpiracy; nor did ever EMILIA promiſe her Love to CINNA, but upon condition that he ſhould entirely devote himſelf to their Enterprize. Thus they plotted before they loved one another; and their Paſſion, which blended its uneaſineſſes and fears with thoſe that ever attend Conſpiracies, was ſtill ſubmiſſive and ſubſervient to the deſire of Revenge, and the love of Liberty.

As their Deſign was upon the point of execution, CINNA being wrought upon by the confidence and benefits of AUGUSTUS, diſcover'd to EMILIA a ſoul affected with remorſe, and ready to follow other counſels: but EMILIA, more a Roman than CINNA, reproach'd him with his weakneſs, and remain'd more firm in her reſolution than ever. Hereupon ſhe reviled her Lover, and impoſed upon him thoſe Conditions which you could not endure; but which, Madam, you will certainly approve,

approve, when you have better conſulted your own Reaſon. The deſire of Revenge was the firſt paſſion of EMILIA: the deſign of reſtoring the Commonwealth, join'd it ſelf with that deſire; Love was only the reſult of the Conſpiracy, and entred the ſoul of the Conſpirators more like a ſervant than a maſter.

Joignons à la douceur de venger nos Parens
La Gloire qu'on remporte à punir les Tyrans;
Et faiſons publier par toute l'Italie,
La Liberté de Rome eſt l'oeuvre d'Emilie;
On a touché ſon ame, & ſon coeur s'eſt épris;
Mais elle n'a donné ſon amour qu'à ce prix [1].

That is,

'Tis ſweet t' avenge a proſcrib'd Family,
'Tis glorious to pull down proud Tyranny:
This deed thro' Italy will ſound my fame,
And Rome will owe its Freedom to my name.
My heart, 'tis true, was won: but ſuch a prize
Was only to reward the enterprize.

You was born at Rome, Madam, and have there receiv'd a Soul of the ſame ſtamp with thoſe of the PORCIA's, and ARRIA's [2], whereas the others that are born there, have but common Italian Souls. With this great, this Roman Soul, if you liv'd now-a-days in a Republick that ſhould be oppreſs'd; if your Parents were out-law'd; your Houſe deſolate; and, which is moſt odious and intolerable to a free-born Perſon, if one of your

[1] *Emilia's ſpeech to her Confident in Corneille's* Cinna.
[2] *The Wives of Brutus and Petus.*

Equals was become your Maſter: that Dagger you have bought to plunge it into your own breaſt, upon the proſpect of the ruin of your Country, would you not try its edge on the Tyrant, before you uſed it againſt your ſelf? Undoubtedly you would plot: and a miſerable Lover who would ſuggeſt to you the weakneſs of a Remorſe, would be treated with more ſeverity by HORTENSIA, than CINNA ever was by EMILIA.

I put the caſe, you and I ſhould live in the ſame Commonwealth, whoſe Liberty is oppreſs'd by an ambitious Fellow-Citizen. In ſuch a deplorable condition I ſhould offer to you an old CINNA, who would make but a very ſmall impreſſion on your heart: but, however, if you had commanded him to puniſh the Tyrant, he would not come back to you with qualms of conſcience, and ſelfiſh conſiderations. He would look upon the Confidence and Benefits of the new AUGUSTUS as Injuries; Dangers would but animate him to ſerve you; and, in ſhort, he would carry ſuch a generous ſpirit to the execution of the Enterprize, that you would either pity him dead, for having obey'd your Orders, or commend him alive, for having perform'd them.

How miſerable is the Condition of an old Philoſopher! he cares not for Glory, and the beſt that can befal him, is to have all his ſervices rewarded by a little Praiſe. Nor is this ſhew of favour, as vain and empty as it is, granted him but very rarely: and he even finds others more inclin'd to vex, than commend him. God grant the Portugueſe Ambaſſador [3] long to live! for if he was dead and gone, the Philoſopher [4] would be next expos'd to the ill uſage his Excellency undergoes every day.

To

[3] *Count de Melos.*
[4] *M. de St. Evremond himſelf.*

To Meſſieurs de ***.

III. IF I ſometimes diſpute with you, Gentlemen, 'tis only to fill up the vacancy of Play, and to divert the tedioufneſs of a languiſhing dull Converſation. I contend with deſign to yield; and bring but weak Reaſons to oppoſe you, being ready prepar'd to acknowledge the ſuperiority of your Arguments.

Upon theſe Conſiderations, I have maintain'd that *Le Menteur* [1] was a good Comedy; that the Subject or Plot of the *Cid* was happy and well laid; and, tho that Play be not altogether without faults, yet that it appear'd very well upon the Stage. I have likewiſe maintain'd that *Rodogune* was a very fine Tragedy; and that *Oedipus* ought to paſs for a maſter-piece of Art: could I do you a greater pleaſure, Gentlemen, than to give you ſo juſt an occaſion to contradict me, and to ſhew the ſtrength and clearneſs of your Judgment at the expence of mine?

I had maintain'd, that in order to make a fine Play, a man ought to pitch upon a noble Subject, lay the Plot right, purſue it well, and conduct it naturally to its end; that Characters ought to enter into the frame of the Plot, and not the Plot be framed after the drawing of the Characters; that our Actions ought to go before our Qualities and Humours; that we ought to aſſign Philoſophy the province of acquainting us with what Men are, and Comedy

[1] *That is*, The Lyar.

medy with what they do: in ſhort, that 'tis not human Nature we ought principally to explain, but rather human Condition we ought to repreſent upon the Stage.

Did I not do you a good turn, Gentlemen, when I made my ſelf ridiculous by ſuch fooliſh poſitions? Could I do more for you, than to expoſe to your cenſure the uncouthneſs of an old Taſte, which has ſhewn the refinement of yours? You are in the right, Gentlemen, you are in the right to laugh at the Dreams of ARISTOTLE, and HORACE; the Reveries of HEINSIUS, and GROTIUS; the Caprices of CORNEILLE, and BEN JOHNSON; and the Imaginations of RAPIN, and BOILEAU. The only Rule for Gentlemen, is the Mode. What avails a Reaſon not eſtabliſh'd; and who can find fault with a pleaſing Extravagance?

I confeſs times have been, when 'twas neceſſary both to chuſe noble Subjects, and to manage them well: but now-a-days Characters are ſufficient; and I beg Mr. BAYS[2] pardon for thinking him ridiculous, when he boaſts of having found the way to make Plays without a Plot. I muſt alſo beg your pardon, Gentlemen; for as you are of the ſame opinion, I have equally offended you; which obliges me to give you the like ſatisfaction: but I do not pretend to be reconcil'd with you barely as to Comedy; I hope you will for the future treat me more favourably in every thing, and that Madam MAZARIN will be leſs oppoſite to me than ſhe is.

What have I done to your Grace, my Lady Dutcheſs, to treat me at the rate you do? There's none but I and the Devil of Don QUEVEDO, to whom all contradictory Qualities are aſcrib'd[3]. You

[2] *See the* Rehearſal, *a Play written by the Duke of Buckingham.*

[3] *See Don Quevedo's* Viſions.

You find me inſipid in my compliments, you find me biting in telling truth: if I hold my tongue, I am too diſcreet; if I ſpeak, I am too free. When I diſpute, you are offended at the contention: when I forbear diſputing, you look upon my diſcretion as the effect of ſcorn and diſdain. Do I tell any piece of news? I am wrong inform'd: do I tell none, I am myſterious. At Hombre I am watch'd as if I were a Sharper; and yet am cheated as a ſilly Bubble. I am wrong'd, and yet condemn'd. I am puniſh'd for other peoples faults: every body makes a noiſe, every body complains; and I am the only ſufferer.

I am oblig'd to you for all theſe things, Madam; not to mention that you give the Publick ſuch a Character of me, as you pleaſe. You make me reverence thoſe I deſpiſe; deſpiſe thoſe I honour; offend thoſe I fear. Quarter, quarter, my Lady Dutcheſs; I yield: there's no Victory in engaging thoſe that have ſurrender'd themſelves. Carry your arms againſt Rebels; force the obſtinate; but govern the conquer'd with gentleneſs. The difference that's now between the one and t'other will laſt long. A day will come (and that great day is not far off) when Count DE MELOS will no longer murmur at Hombre, and Baron DE LA TAULADE loſe without fretting. For my own part, I have abandon'd the *Viſionaires* [4], and *Le Menteur:* RACINE is preferr'd to CORNEILLE; and the Characters before the Plot. I not only renounce my own opinion, Madam, but maintain yours with more reſolution than Mr. VILLIERS can ſhew in maintaining the Beauty of his Relations. I have chang'd the order both of my Praiſes and Cenſures: from five a-clock in the evening,

[4] *A Comedy written by M. Deſmaretz, and much eſteem'd by the late Earl of Dorſet, as well as the* Menteur *of Corneille.*

vening, I ſhall blame what you ſhall judge blameable; and at midnight I ſhall commend what you ſhall think praiſe-worthy. As the laſt ſacrifice I can make, I ſhall continue as long as you pleaſe the curſed Partnerſhip between the Ambaſſador of France, Count CASTELMELHOR [5], and my ſelf. Propoſe any thing that's more difficult; and your commands, Madam, will enable me to perform it.

A LETTER TO THE DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

IF you find any Extravagancies in the little Book I ſend you, you are oblig'd to excuſe them, ſince you have robb'd me of my Judgment, which might have hinder'd me from committing them to writing. I have been honour'd in my time, with the company of very amiable Perſons, to whom I am beholden for leaving me ſo much good ſenſe as I had occaſion for, to eſteem their merit, without diſturbing my repoſe: but I have juſt grounds to complain of you, for plundering me of all my Reaſon, which the others had left me.

How

[5] *Don Luis de Vaſconcellos and Souſa, Count de Caſtelmelhor, firſt Miniſter and Favorite of Alphonſo King of Portugal. After the Revolution that happen'd in that Kingdom in 1667, he was obliged to retire to Turin, from whence he obtain'd leave to come into England, where he ſtaid ten or twelve years.*

How unhappy is my condition! I have loſt every thing on the ſide of Reaſon, and I ſee nothing for me to pretend to on the ſide of Paſſion. Shall I aſk you to love a man of my age? I have not been ſo good a Chriſtian as to expect miracles in my favour. If the merit of my Paſſion could obtain of you a concern for my being old, and a deſire that I were young again, I ſhould be content. The favour of a Wiſh is but a ſmall matter; pray refuſe me not that. It is natural to wiſh that every thing we love were amiable.

There never was ſo diſintereſted a Paſſion in the world, as mine. I love thoſe you love, nor do I love leſs thoſe who love you; I conſider your Lovers as your Subjects, inſtead of hating them as my Rivals: and that which is yours is dearer to me, than that which is againſt me is hateful to me. As for what relates to the Perſons who are dear to you, I take no leſs a concern in them than you; my ſoul carries its movements and affections to the place where yours are; I relent when you grow tender; when you languiſh 'tis the ſame caſe with me. The paſſionate Songs at the Opera make no impreſſion upon me of themſelves; they have no manner of influence over me, but by that which they have over you. I am touch'd to ſee you touch'd; and thoſe melancholy Sighs, which, now and then, ſteal unawares from you, put my heart to no leſs expence than they do yours.

I have little or no ſhare in cauſing any of your pains, but I ſuffer from them as much as you do. Sometimes you produce in us a Paſſion different from that which you deſign'd to excite. If you repeat any Verſes out of the *Andromache*, you inſpire Love with the ſentiments of a Mother who would only ſtir up Pity. You endeavour to make us ſenſible of her Misfortunes, and you ſoon ſee us ſenſible of your own Charms. Sad and compaſſionate expreſ-

expreſſions revive ſecretly in our hearts the Paſſion which they have for you; and the grief which you would raiſe in us for an unfortunate Lady, becomes a natural ſenſe of our own torments.

One ſhould not believe this without making experience of it, at his own coſt. Thoſe matters that ſeem moſt oppoſite to tenderneſs, aſſume an affecting air in your mouth: your Reaſonings, your Diſputes, your Altercations, nay, your very Anger have their charms; ſo difficult it is to find any thing in you, which does not contribute to the Paſſion you inſpire. Nothing comes from you which is not amiable; nothing is form'd in you which does not turn to love.

A ſerious Reflection puts me in mind that you will laugh at me for this Diſcourſe; but you cannot make merry with my weakneſs, without being pleas'd with your Beauty; and I am ſatisfied with my ſhame, if it gives you any ſatisfaction. A man may ſacrifice his Repoſe, his Liberty, and his Fortune: but *Glory*, ſays MONTAIGNE, *is never ſacrificed.* I will make bold to contradict MONTAIGNE in this particular; and don't refuſe to become ridiculous for the love of you.

But upon ſecond thoughts, Madam, we cannot make you a ſacrifice of this nature: ſince a man can never be ridiculous in loving you. A Miniſter of State renounces his Politicks for you; and a Philoſopher his Morals, without any prejudice to their reputation. The power of an exquiſite Beauty juſtifies all the Paſſion which it is capable of producing; and after having conſulted my Judgment as nicely as my Heart, I will tell you, without fearing to be ridicul'd for it, that *I love you.*

A

LETTER

TO THE

EARL OF ST. ALBANS.

I Have been at Death's door, my Lord, ſince I had the honour of ſeeing your Lordſhip; and what contributes to make me yet more unhappy, there is no Diſtemper now ſtirring at London, but only what I languiſh under, no Gout, no Rheumatiſm, nay not ſo much as the Tooth-ach. My Lord ARLINGTON, to whom you yielded the title of the firſt gouty Man in England, might now take twenty turns in the Mall, as well as the good Gentlewoman that uſes to attend you. As for my ſelf, I am not yet fully reſtor'd to my health; and had it not been for ſome Remedies I met with, I had certainly died.

But why, my Lord, ſhould you reſolve to paſs the winter in a Country where the Horſes are a hundred times better look'd after than we are? where there are MAYERNES[1] to cure the diſeaſes of the Race-horſes, and little better than Farriers to cure thoſe of the men. If you were poſſeſs'd with any of thoſe religious Enthuſiaſms, which make

[1] *Sir Theodore Mayerne was a famous Phyſician in the Reigns of King Charles* I. *and King Charles* II.

make ſo many Fanaticks weary of their lives, I ſhould be able to account for this ſtrange impatience of yours to die. But, my Lord, if you are a Man like one of us; if you ſtill preſerve a natural inclination to live, as Monſieur the Mareſchal DE VILLEROY, the Maſter of the Horſe to the King of France [a], Monſieur DE RUVIGNY, and your other Contemporaries continue to do; why ſhould you ſo obſtinately pitch upon a place where you don't paſs one day, without retrenching five or ſix, at leaſt, of your life?

But I dwell too long upon a Diſcourſe, which I ought to have lightly paſs'd over. I muſt now come to more agreeable ideas. The Dutcheſs of PORTSMOUTH will give you what ſhare in her Bank you pleaſe. My Lord HYDE [b] promiſes to ſhew you certain Civilities, which will almoſt amount to a Confidence. My Lord Ambaſſador offers to give you a full inſight into the affairs of Hungary, and the War that the Northern Princes are now going to engage in; and what I eſteem much more, the Duke of ORMOND is ready to play with you at Trick-Track without odds. You will tell me now, that you are ſcarce able to ſee, and that you are troubled with ſo many indiſpoſitions that the World is weary of you. My Lord, you take the thing wrong: 'tis the Country, and not the World that is weary of you.

In the Country, people judge of you by the weakneſs of your ſight: your Infirmities there are taken for faults; and you can't imagine what a deſpicable opinion your robuſt Country Gentlemen have of an infirm Courtier. Here in Town, my Lord, you are valued for the ſtrength of your Judgment;

[a] *Monſieur de Beringhen.*
[b] *Afterwards Earl of Rocheſter.*

ment; your Infirmities are pitied, and your good Qualities reverenc'd.

What a difference is there then between thoſe two places to live in! and yet, my Lord, you have choſen that which is ſo contrary to your Health, and to your Reputation. That which uſes to be the greateſt puniſhment of perſons in diſgrace, you have voluntarily impoſed upon your ſelf: you have depriv'd your ſelf of the Society of men that know the world, and with whom you have always lived. A man may comfort himſelf for the loſs of his Fortune, but cannot receive conſolation after he has loſt the ſweetneſs of agreeable Converſation, and is perpetually perſecuted by Impertinents. Relieve your ſelf with Reaſon as long as you pleaſe: the relief of Reaſon ſignifies nothing, where the delicacy of one's Taſte is offended.

Return, my Lord, return to your friends, that know your merit, as you know theirs. There is not one of them who will not contribute, as far as in him lies, either to your relief, or your pleaſure. The politeneſs of my Lord SUNDERLAND, will ſoon make you ſenſible that that ſort of life, which you thought the ſweeteſt and moſt natural, is rude and groſs: and that eaſy, free, and unconſtrain'd way of living which he has ſet up at Court, will for ever make you out of love with the falſe tranquillity you boaſt of in the Country. The Dutcheſs of MAZARIN will eaſe you of your ſcruple about Viſits; ſhe will not take it ill that you ſit juſt by her without ſeeing her; and, leſs ſenſible of the injury ſhe will receive than of the loſs you will ſuffer by it, ſhe will make you taſte the ſweetneſs of a Converſation, which is not at all inferior to the charms of her Beauty. For your ſake ſhe will ſuſpend her eagerneſs for Baſſett; and oblige you with that pure and calm Reaſon, which ſhe refuſes us every day. Mr. WALLER has in ſtore a deli-

cious Converſation for you. I am not ſo vain as to tell you any thing of my own: I had better promiſe you my ſervices on Sundays, and ſuffer my ſelf to loſe at Cheſs, every time that Monſieur DE SAISSAC bets on my ſide. I will ſay nothing to you of Miſtreſs CROFTS: ſince ſhe has been *Dutcheſs of Chaſtellerault*, I can't tell how ſhe will behave her ſelf towards *the Earl of St. Albans*[4].

If theſe temptations are too weak, and you are fully reſolved to retire out of the world from this hour; pray conſider, my Lord, that a Perſon of Quality ought to retire into a capital City. Your Reaſon will ſteal you out of the world in a City, whenever you pleaſe: your Imagination will carry you into the Country, even when you would not have it. Live here, my Lord, like a Philoſopher at your own houſe. 'Twill be a new merit, for which the world will eſteem you. To live like a Philoſopher in Suffolk, is to make one's ſelf obſcure rather than wiſe; and forgotten by others, inſtead of knowing one's ſelf.

The greateſt Philoſophers of Antiquity lived in the fineſt City of Greece; and he who adviſed his Diſciples to *conceal their Life*[5], had delicate fine Gardens at Athens, where five or ſix of his Friends plaid the Philoſophers with him. I know not how to

[4] *Miſtreſs Crofts, Siſter to the Lord Crofts, had been one of the Maids of Honour to the Queen. After ſhe retired from Court, her houſe became a pleaſurable Rendezvous, where the Earl of St. Albans, and two or three more Perſons of Quality uſed to ſup almoſt every night. The Earl of Arran, afterwards Duke of Hamilton, paid aſſiduous court to that Lady, whereupon the Earl of St. Albans withdrew. M. de St. Evremond in this place rallies this new Intrigue: calling Miſtreſs Crofts* Dutcheſs of Chaſtellerault; *becauſe the Earl of Arran had been in France, to purſue an old claim of the Houſe of Hamilton, to the Dutchy of Chaſtellerault.*

[5] *See Vol.* I. *pag.* 54.

to find my way from Athens back to London. However, I could wiſh that you would return thither as ſoon as I. And now, my Lord, I am here to expect you, and deſire you to bring Mr. JERMYN along with you. Reſtore him to the World, even in ſpite of himſelf. It will not be long ere he will return you thanks for a violence ſo happily committed; neither will you, my Lord, be behind-hand with us long, for owing this Reſolution to our advice.

A

LETTER

TO THE DUKE OF

BUCKINGHAM.

MY LORD;

MR. BURNET[1] is ſo ſtrongly perſuaded of the ſincerity of your Converſion, that he ſpeaks of it to all your Friends after this rate: *I dare venture my own Salvation upon the ſame bottom with that of the Duke of* BUCKINGHAM; *ſo firm a belief have I of the Reformation of his Life.* "Converſion, Mr. BURNET, *ſays Mr.* WALLER, have a care what you ſay; people don't "uſe to be converted ſo now-a-days: 'tis neither "to you, nor me, nor any perſon living, that we "are beholden for this ſtrange alteration in the

[1] *The late Biſhop of Sarisbury.*

" Duke of BUCKINGHAM. 'Tis a new friend " of his, but one that has been dead many hundred " years ſince, that has very lately brought about " this miraculous change that ſo ſurprizes us. I " mean PETRONIUS ARBITER, the moſt de- " licate man of his age for Poetry, Painting, and " Muſick. One that perpetually ſtudied and pur- " ſued Pleaſure, one that turn'd the day into night, " and the night into day; but at the ſame time, " one who had ſo abſolute a command over his " Vices and Irregularities, that whenever he " thought fit, he was one of the moſt regular " men in the univerſe. The Duke of BUCK- " INGHAM, who has long reſembled him in a " thouſand other Qualities, was reſolved of late to " imitate him too in this. Thus I have ſhewn you, " Mr. BURNET, from whence proceeds this alte- " ration in his Grace's Life, which you, it ſeems, " have miſtaken for a Converſion."

But with Mr. BURNET's and Mr. WALLER's leave, I ſhall account for it after another manner. 'Tis a certain Maxim with me, that no man of a nice palate can love Vice, when once it ceaſes to be agreeable; therefore I don't wonder that a Perſon of a refined taſte, takes up with the virtue of Continence in the North, where there are no Objects to tempt him. But I dare engage, that if your Grace were among Beauties that had Charms enough to tempt you, we ſhould ſoon find the new Convert of Mr. BURNET, and Mr. WALLER's new PETRONIUS, to be nothing in the world but the true genuine Duke of BUCKINGHAM.

Heaven forbid that I ſhould ever perſuade you to love. But I have another ſin to propoſe to you, which of your ſelf you would never gueſs; and yet I recommend it ſincerely to you, and from the bottom of my heart: I mean Covetouſneſs, which

in

in my opinion would be more advantageous to your Grace, than the Wiſdom of Philoſophers, or the Glory of Conquerors. To be ſhort, I ſhould rather chuſe to ſee your Grace reſemble SIR CHARLES HERBERT, or any of the Heroes in Lombard-ſtreet, than either SOCRATES or CESAR. The greater the difficulty is, the greater is the merit of ſurmounting it. Now all the world knows that your Grace will find more trouble to imitate the former, than the two latter Gentlemen.

As we don't all on a ſudden arrive to the height of Perfection, I do not exact from you that ſevere diſcipline of Œconomy, which makes a man deny himſelf every thing amidſt an affluence of all. What I beg of your Grace, is, that you would have a watchful eye upon thoſe who have the fingering of your Money, to keep them honeſt in ſpite of themſelves. For unleſs out of tenderneſs to their Souls, you hinder them from playing the Knaves, I dare ſwear for them that they will venture Damnation an hundred times a-day, and all in your Grace's ſervice.

If ever you return to London, with a ſmall Retinue, but a great deal of Money in your pocket, you will certainly be the wonder of the whole Nation. If you neglect this advice, the greater part of the world will never be for you, and you muſt content your ſelf with a few Admirers in private, of whom your moſt humble Servant ſhall always be the firſt.

A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

With a DISCOURSE *upon* RELIGION.

THE Diſcourſe we had together yeſterday in the evening, has been running in my head all night: nor do I wonder at it, Madam; for when a man has had the pleaſure of ſeeing you, and hearing you ſpeak before he goes to bed, he muſt not expect that of ſound ſleeping. I dreamt that Monſieur BARILLON argued with a great deal of ſolidity. Count DE MELOS, who ever preferr'd a ſubmiſſive mind to reaſoning, was willing to yield to your Arguments; and look'd upon your knowledge as an Authority which he ought to reverence.

I confeſs I was both convinc'd by, and charm'd with, your Reaſons; which made their impreſſion on my mind with all the force of Truth, and inſinuated themſelves into my heart, with all the allurements of your Perſon. The Heart, ſoft and tender as it is, has a natural repugnance to the auſterity of Reaſon: but your Reaſon has found a great

great Secret; for it enlightens the mind, and at the ſame time kindles a paſſion in the heart. Hitherto Reaſon was never accounted among the attractives of the fair ſex; you are the firſt that have made it proper to inſpire Love. Had it not been for you, Madam, the Truth we ſearch after would have appear'd very harſh to us. Truth which was baniſh'd common converſation, as impertinent, and ſuppreſs'd in a dark receſs, as a mover of ſedition; Truth, I ſay, changes its nature in your mouth, and comes out only to reconcile to you the minds of every body. You ſet it up again in the world, with an entire ſatisfaction of all that hear you ſpeak.

Not, Madam, but that you have your ſhare of the malignity of nature too. You have ſometimes a ſet deſign to offend us; and without being a conjurer, a man may diſcover your malicious intentions: but your Charms are ſuperior to theſe ill intentions. You pleaſe even when you have a mind to do the contrary; and the only difficulty which you may find inſeparable, is not to pleaſe.

Truth can bear no longer the Violence you have offer'd to it; and therefore will reſume the dryneſs and auſterity you have taken from it. I am going to reſtore it its natural qualities; and you'll be ſoon ſenſible of it, Madam, upon peruſal of the ſmall Diſcourſe I ſend you herewith.

A DISCOURSE.

" As ſoon as we have loſt the taſte of Pleaſures, " our fancy furniſhes us with agreeable Ideas, which " ſupply the place of ſenſible things. The Mind " endeavours to make up loſt pleaſures, and ſo goes " to ſeek advantages in the next World, when the " enjoyments that affected the Body are fled from " us.

" A diſguſt for Libertiniſm and Debauchery raiſes ſometimes in us a deſire to turn devout; but " as ſoon as we are ſettled in a more religious and " holy way of living, we ſpend our days in endeavouring to comprehend what cannot be comprehended; and theſe barren and empty Contemplations ſometimes produce irkſom Reflections on " the torment we ſuffer, for a Good oppoſite to the " Senſes, little known to Reaſon, and faintly conceived by an uncertain and unſure Faith. From " hence ſpring the greateſt diſorders and irregularities in Monaſteries: For when the Felicity which " is promiſed to recluſe religious perſons happens to " appear doubtful, the certain Ill they muſt undergo becomes inſupportable to them.

" The variety of Tempers has a great ſhare in " the diverſity of Opinions men entertain about " things ſupernatural. Soft and tender Souls naturally incline to the love of God; and the timorous to the fear of Hell; the irreſolute lie in " doubt; and the wiſe ſtick to what's moſt ſolid, " without examining what's moſt true. The docible acquieſce; the opiniated grow obſtinate in the " Sentiments they have either received from others " or form'd themſelves; and the ſticklers for Reaſon, will be convinc'd by proofs which they cannot find.

" *When Men*, ſaid Mr. WURTS[1], *have once taken* " *out of Chriſtianity what they have foiſted into it,* " *there will be but one Religion, as plain in its Doc-* " *trine, as pure in its Morals.*

" As we do not receive our Belief from Reaſon[2], " ſo neither does Reaſon make us change our Be- " lief. A ſecret diſguſt for old Opinions, makes us " renounce

[1] *General of the Dutch Troops, in the War of* 1672.

[2] *See M. Bayle's* Philoſophical Commentary on theſe words of JESUS CHRIST, Compel them to come in. *Chap.* x.

" renounce the Religion we have been bred in; the " ſatisfaction the mind finds in new thoughts, makes " us take up with another; but yet when a man " has changed his Religion, if he uſes ſtrong argu- " ments againſt the Errors he has abandon'd, he has " but very weak ones to maintain the truth of the " Faith he has embrac'd.

" Doctrine is contentious every where; and will " eternally afford matter of controverſy in all Reli- " gions; but we may agree upon what relates to " Morals. The World are unanimous and of the " ſame opinion as to the commands God has laid " upon us, and the obedience we owe to him; for " in this caſe God manifeſts himſelf to men in things " which men know and are ſenſible of. As for " Myſteries, they are above the reach of human un- " derſtanding; and 'tis in vain we endeavour to " know what's beyond our Knowledge, and is nei- " ther the object of our Senſes, nor of our Reaſon. " Cuſtom authorizes the diſcourſing about it, but " Grace alone can inſpire the belief of it.

" It is not in our power to believe, either what " others pleaſe, or even what we deſire. The Un- " derſtanding cannot acquieſce but in ſuch things as " appear evident to it; but the Will ought to ſub- " mit to the Commands it receives.

THE CHARACTER OF THE DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I AM unjuſtly accuſed for having too great a Complaiſance for Madam MAZARIN: for in truth, there is no Perſon that ſhe has greater reaſon to complain of, than my ſelf. For ſix months together I have been maliciouſly ſpying out ſomething in her, which might diſpleaſe me, but in ſpite of all my endeavours, I could diſcover nothing there that was not too lovely, and too charming. An ill-natur'd curioſity makes me examine every Feature in her face, with a deſign either to meet there ſome ſhocking irregularity, or ſome diſguſting diſagreeableneſs. But how unluckily do I ſucceed in my deſign! every Feature about her has a particular Beauty, that does not in the leaſt yield to that of her Eyes, which by the conſent of all the world are the fineſt in the univerſe. One thing there is that entirely confounds me: her Teeth, her Lips, her Mouth, and all the graces that attend it, are loſt amongſt the great variety of Beauties in her Face; but if we compare them to theſe fine mouths, that make the greateſt Charm of thoſe Perſons whom we moſt admire, they drown, and eclipſe every

every thing elſe, and what's but indifferent in her, will not ſuffer us to conſider what's moſt remarkable in others. The malice of my Curioſity does not ſtop here. I proceed to ſpy out ſome defect in her ſhape; and I find I know not what Graces of Nature ſo happily, and ſo liberally ſcatter'd in her perſon, that the genteelneſs of others only ſeems to be conſtraint and affectation.

When Madam MAZARIN pleaſes me too much in her negligence, I adviſe her to have recourſe to Art, hoping that her ornaments and her dreſs will not fail to ruin her native Charms: but ſcarce has ſhe dreſs'd her ſelf, but I am forc'd to confeſs, that I never ſaw in any perſon ſo great and ſo noble an Air as hers. Nor is my ill-nature ſatisfied with this. I have a mind to ſee her in her chamber, amongſt her Dogs, her Monkeys, and her Birds, hoping that the diſorder of her dreſs, will make her loſe the majeſty of that Beauty, that aſtoniſh'd us at Court. But here it is, that ſhe is a hundred times more amiable; here it is, that a more natural Charm gives us a diſguſt to all that art and induſtry can do; here it is that the freedom of her wit and of her humour leaves none to the perſon that beholds her.

What could the greateſt of her enemies do more? I wiſh ſome ſickneſs might invade her to undermine her Graces: but, alas! we are more to be pitied than ſhe in her Pains. Her very Pains have a charm that does us a greater miſchief, than the ſufferer by them.

After having relented and grieved at her Indiſpoſition, I endeavour to give her an occaſion to abuſe me, that I may be exaſperated againſt her: with this deſign I purpoſely contradict all ſhe ſays; I provoke her Anger by contention; I put her in the way to wrong me at play; I ſuggeſt to my ſelf all the means of my oppreſſion that I may be furniſh-

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ed with a pretence for a real Reſentment. But, alas! to what purpoſe is all this troubleſom Induſtry? Her ill treatment pleaſes inſtead of provoking; and her injuries, more charming than the careſſes of others, are ſo many Charms, that enſlave me to her will. I paſs from her ſerious moments, to thoſe of her gaiety; for as I am ſometimes willing to ſee her ſerious, out of hopes to find her leſs agreeable; ſo am I deſirous to ſee her more free, thinking to find her indiſcreet. But when ſhe's ſerious, ſhe makes us admire her good Senſe; when free and jovial, her Sprightlineſs.

She knows as much as a Man can know; and ſhe conceals her Knowledge with all the diſcretion that becomes a prudent Woman. She has ſome acquired Learning, which never betrays the Study ſhe employ'd to gain it. She has ſome happy Thoughts, that are as far from an affected Art that diſpleaſes us, as from a natural Luxuriancy that offends us.

I have ſeen ſome Ladies that have made conqueſts by the advantage of their Beauty, and loſt them again thro' a defect of Wit. I have ſeen others that engag'd us to them, by being beautiful and witty together; but diſcourag'd us from a farther purſuit by their indiſcretion, fickleneſs and avarice. But in Madam MAZARIN, if you paſs from her Face to her Wit, from the qualities of her Mind to thoſe of her Soul, you will find that every thing attracts you, that every thing faſtens and binds you, and that nothing can diſengage you. We defend our ſelves from the Charms of other Ladies by our Reaſon: but 'tis Reaſon that ſubjects us to her Power. With other Ladies our Love generally begins, where our Reaſon ends: here our Love cannot end, unleſs we loſe our Reaſon.

What I obſerve to be moſt extraordinary in Madam MAZARIN, is, that ſhe daily inſpires new Deſires;

Deſires; and that after a long familiarity, ſhe makes us feel all the tender ſweetneſs of a growing Paſſion. She is the only perſon of her Sex, for whom we may be eternally conſtant; and with whom one may enjoy every hour the diverſion of Inconſtancy. We never change for her Perſon: we change every moment for her Features; and reliſh, in ſome manner, all that new, that lively joy, which unfaithfulneſs in Love makes us feel.

Sometimes her Mouth is abandon'd for her Eyes; ſometimes we leave her Eyes to admire her Mouth, her Cheeks, her Noſe, her Eyebrows, her Forehead, her Hair, nay, her Ears, (ſo much pains has Nature taken to make every thing perfect in this beautiful body!) her Ears attract our inclinations in their turn, and make us taſte the pleaſure of change. To conſider her Features ſeparately, one would be apt to ſay, that there is a ſecret jealouſy between them; and that they are ſtill upon the watch to ſteal Lovers from one another: To conſider them in conjunction, and as they are united and joyned together, we ſee them form a Beauty, that neither ſuffers Inconſtancy for it ſelf, nor Fidelity for others. I have ſaid enough of what's to be ſeen: let us now gueſs at hidden Beauties; and boldly affirm, by conjecture, that the Merit of what we do not ſee far ſurpaſſes all that we have ſeen.

A LETTER TO THE DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I Read juſt now, with Monſieur VAN BEUNINGEN[1], the Copy of Verſes you did me the honour to ſend me[2]. That Ambaſſador, who has paſs'd his life in ſtudy, as well as in the management of affairs, thinks them very fine; and for my own part, I am of opinion, that there are in that little piece ſome verſes of as high and noble ſtrain as I have ſeen this good while, in our language. What makes me value them the more, is, becauſe there's Novelty and good Senſe; which are not eaſily match'd. For our Novelties have often a caſt of extravagance; and the good Senſe which is often found in our Writings, is generally borrow'd from Antiquity, rather than of our own growth. I would have the Moderns inſpired by the wit of the Ancients, but would not have them ſteal it, and paſs it for their own. I allow 'em to teach us how to think well, but hate to make uſe of their Thoughts. What

[1] *Ambaſſador of the States General to King Charles* II.

[2] *The Duke of Nevers, Brother to the Dutcheſs of Mazarini was the Author of theſe Verſes.*

What remains of their Works had the advantage of Novelty, when they wrote it, whereas, what we borrow from them now, is grown obſolete by length of time; and is dropt, as it were dead and extinguiſh'd, into the brain of our Authors.

What have we to do with a new Author, who puts forth nothing but old Productions; who ſets himſelf out with the fancies of the Greeks, and impoſes on the world their Knowledge for his own? A vaſt number of Rules, made three thouſand years ago, are ſet up to be the Standard of what's writing now-a-days; without conſidering that neither the Subjects to be treated, nor the Genius to be regulated are the ſame.

If we ſhould make Love like ANACREON and SAPPHO, nothing would be more ridiculous; if like TERENCE, nothing more Plebeian, or Citizen-like; and if like LUCIAN, nothing more groſs and lewd. All ages have a peculiar character proper to themſelves: they have their Politicks, their Intereſts, their Affairs; and, in ſome meaſure, their Morals, having their particular Virtues and Vices. I own 'tis all Humanity ſtill: but Nature is various in men; and Art, which is nothing but an imitation of Nature, ought to vary as ſhe does. Our impertinences are not the ſame which HORACE ridicul'd; nor are our vices the ſame which JUVENAL rebuk'd: we muſt therefore make uſe of other raillery and reproofs.

I am oblig'd to the Duke of NEVERS: for I have a long while been looking for Novelty, and he has brought it in my way. I find in him one who thinks himſelf what he writes, and gives his own turn to his expreſſions.

Moy qui n'ai dans mes Vers échapés au hazard,
Que l'audace pour regle, & le bon-ſens pour art.

If

If *Chance*, *Boldneſs*, and *Good-ſenſe* produce ſo many Beauties, I adviſe Poets to lay aſide all Rules of Art, and to give a looſe to their natural Genius.

Pour orner le Francois de nouvelles parures,
Je hazarde en mes Vers d'inſolentes figures.

He who ventures upon ſuch *inſolent Figures*, is ſure to have none but noble ones: 'tis a happy boldneſs, which has nothing extravagant or falſe in it; it is a flaſh of imagination, which judgment may own for one of its lights.

I know not whether the advantages which the Duke of NEVERS aſcribes to Madam DE LA FAYETTE, and to Monſieur DE MERE', are ſincere. Their merit perſuades they are ſo: otherwiſe I ſhould ſuſpect the niceneſs of the turn; and be afraid that there might be a banter concealed under the *Sublime* of the one, and the *various Charms* of the other. The Praiſe he gives to Monſieur BOURDELOT is more plainly expreſs'd. For my own part, I ſhould beſtow no leſs on his Perſon; but I ſhould take care that my commendations ſhould not have ſo near a relation to his Profeſſion. In my opinion, Phyſic kills more than it cures; and nothing leſs than your Brother's Poetry, could reſtore the honour of a Science, which that of MOLIERE had run down. To be free with you, I would retrench ſomething from the skill of the Phyſician, to beſtow more, if poſſible, on the wit and knowledge of the Gentleman.

I have more veneration for the Court of Rome, than for the Faculty of Paris; and tho I have full liberty to ſpeak of the Pope, in a Country where they burn him yearly, I ſtill ſay nothing of his Elogy, ſave only, that St. PETER ought to be jealous of it:

it: for it is more eaſy to found a State than to reform it; to ſettle order in it, than to reſtore it.

The caution you ſhew whenever you ſpeak of your Husband, makes me paſs ſlightly over *Orgon*, and my diſcretion, founded on yours, takes away from me the idea of the Duke of MAZARIN. But a man who ſhould *beat the price of his Salvation with money in hand*, would give me an ill opinion of the chapman that purchaſes Heaven, and ſtill a worſe of thoſe that ſell it.

Let's return to the beauty of thoſe Verſes, which cannot be the ſame throughout. The elevation of the mind leaves ſome little things for exact Criticks to lay hold on; and it is a comfort which great Wits ought not to grudge thoſe of a moderate ſize. Let poor wretches, to whom Nature has not been indulgent, put themſelves as forward as they can by the labour of ſo crabbed a ſtudy: for my own part, I have run over with pleaſure ſome places that tranſport me; and my Admiration leaves me no room for the ſpleen of Cenſure.

It's far eaſier to praiſe the King in proſe, than in verſe. Verſes, with all the pomp of Poetry, fall ſhort of the magnificence of the Subject; whereas in Proſe a plain truth, is a great Elogy. One needs but barely to relate what the King has done, to efface all that has been written of others. The Duke DE NEVERS has undertaken a more difficult task: he has endeavour'd to find out thoughts that might equal the atchievements of his Heroe. The deſign was bold; nor was he altogether unſucceſsful in it: for if he comes much ſhort of the glory of him he commends, he raiſes himſelf inſenſibly above the Genius of all thoſe that have commended him.

Qui peindra les beaux traits de ſa glorie immortelle?
Le pinceau trembleroit entre les mains d' Appelle.

Quel bonheur d'eſtre nez au Siecle de LOUIS!
Admirons, Bourdelot, ſes exploits inouïs,
Que nous pouvons tous voir, que nous pouvons écrire,
Et plaignons l'avenir, qui ne peut que les lire.

I ſhould lament the condition of our deſcendants, if my own were not more to be lamented. They will live one day; they will enter the world out of which I am upon the point of going; and in which I am reduc'd to read over the King's exploits, without being allow'd to be an eye-witneſs of them, any more than they. 'Tis a great misfortune for a man to paſs away his life at a diſtance from his Empire: but then if Fortune had not baniſh'd me from it, I ſhould not have the happineſs to live in yours. You inſpire Paſſion in every thing that is capable of it; and Reaſon yields to you even thoſe that are paſt any ſenſe of paſſion.

A

LETTER

TO

COUNT D'OLONNE.

I Know not why you ſhould admire my Verſes, ſince I don't admire them my ſelf; for I muſt inform you, that in the opinion of a celebrated maſter in Poetry[1], a Poet is always the moſt affected with his own Compoſitions. As for my ſelf, I acknowledge abundance of Faults in mine, which I might correct, if exactneſs were

[1] *Ariſtotle.*

were not extremely troubleſom to my humour, and did not take up more time than a perſon of my Age can ſpare. Beſides, I have another excuſe, which, if I am not miſtaken, you will allow of: Eſſays are ſeldom Maſter-pieces; and the Praiſes I beſtow upon the King, being the firſt true and ſincere I ever writ, it can be no wonder I had no better ſucceſs. As for thoſe you beſtow upon me, they are an ingenious Irony, of which rhetorical Figure, I was formerly ſo great a Maſter, that the Mareſchal of CLEREMBAUT thought no body but my ſelf capable to vie with you in it. You ought not to have employ'd it againſt a man who has loſt the uſe of it; and who is ſo entirely your humble ſervant as I am. You ſee I am pretty well upon my guard againſt Ridicule; and yet in ſpite of all my precautions, I cannot forbear to indulge my ſelf in the praiſes you give me upon the ſcore of my Taſte. 'Tis your intereſt it ſhou'd be good, true, and delicate; for the idea of yours, which I always preſerve by me, is the rule of mine.

That miracle of Beauty [a] which I formerly ſaw at Bourbon, is the ſame miracle of Beauty which I daily ſee at London. Some additional years have given her more wit, and taken away none of her charms.

Fair Eyes ſo ſweetly charming and divine,
That cauſe ſuch tranſports where you ſhine,
Oh! ne'er to grief your chryſtal treaſures pay,
Your pearls on grief are thrown away.
Tears from thoſe orbs let no misfortunes move;
So rich a tribute's only due to Love.

[a] *The Dutcheſs of Mazarin.*

As for the wicked expedients you adviſe me to, I am not in a condition to practiſe them, neither is ſhe in humour to ſuffer them. If I muſt ſit up all night, they tell me I have not yet ſeen forty. If I am to take a long journey in the wind and rain, what a noble conſtitution has M. DE ST. EVREMOND! But if I lay my head cloſe to hers, ſmell to her hair, or kiſs the tip of her ear, I am preſently asked, whether I knew Madam GABRIELLE[3], and if I made my court to MARY DE MEDICIS? But my Paper fails me. Place me, I pray, among your ſolid Friends, immediately after M. DE CANAPLES[4]. The miracle of love preſents her ſervice to you.

FRIEND-

[3] *Gabrielle d' Eſtrées, Miſtreſs to Henry* IV. *of France.*
[4] *Alphonſe de Crequi, Marquis de Canaples, ſince Duke of Leſdiguieres.*

FRIENDSHIP WITHOUT *FRIENDSHIP.*

TO THE EARL OF ST. ALBANS[1].

I Was a long while of opinion, that Women have no inconſiderable advantage over us; in that we are loved only by the leſs wiſe; and that the wiſeſt of Men thought fit to love them all his life-time. The politeſt Men in Antiquity, the moſt virtuous, and the greateſt, I mean ALCIBIADES, AGESILAUS, and ALEXANDER, were acquainted with other charms beſides thoſe of the Ladies. The moſt magnanimous among the Romans; SCIPIO, the honour of a Republick, which can be reproach'd with nothing, but her ingratitude towards him; SCIPIO, I ſay, is commended for continency, which was no other than his want of taſte, or ſenſibility for the Fair. CESAR, whoſe name alone is a Panegyrick, ſhew'd no averſeneſs to any ſort of Love. SOLOMON was altogether unacquainted with ſuch various likeings and diſguſts: for he wholly devoted himſelf

[1] *The Dutcheſs of Mazarin caus'd this Piece to be printed at London in* 1681, *and put this roguiſh Title to it.*

to the Female Sex, being inſenſible of any other charms but theirs.

'Tis ſomewhat ſurprizing, that the politeſt, the greateſt, the beſt of Men, and the moſt magnanimous, could forbear the love of Women; and as if this kind of Love was reſerv'd for the wife, that SOLOMON made it his principal buſineſs of his Life. It is ſurprizing, I own it; but after due reflection, I find nothing in it that we ought to wonder at. The Polite among the Antients had a great averſeneſs to all manner of ſubjection: and in the purſuit of all Pleaſures, they ſtill retain'd the liberty of paſſing from one Sex to the other, according to their fancy. The love of Women would have ſoften'd the courage of Men; the virtue of the good Men had been adulterated by it; and the ſpirit of the magnanimous might have been weakned: but true Wiſdom ran no great danger with the Female Sex. The wiſe Man, ſtill ſuperior to their weakneſs, their unſteadineſs, and their caprice, can either govern them at his pleaſure, or part with them when he thinks convenient. While he beholds others in ſlavery, and toſs'd by an unfortunate Paſſion, he enjoys a ſteadineſs and calmneſs, that ſooths his pain, and takes off the ſenſe of a thouſand diſquietudes which are not cured by Reaſon alone. Not but that he may fall into ſome error; for there's no ſuch thing as conſtant ſtability in human nature: but it is not long before he recovers his wandering Judgment, and comes to re-ſettle his former Tranquillity.

The world has ſeen an egregious inſtance of this in SOLOMON, who loved the Fair Sex all his life-time; but differently, according to the different periods of his Age. When young, he had all the tenderneſs of a Lover: of which his ſoft and melting expreſſions are ſufficient proof; and 'tis but reading his *Song* or *Canticle* to be convinc'd

vinc'd of it. I muſt beg pardon for not interpreting it in a myſtical ſenſe. I ſhall never be perſuaded to believe that SOLOMON intended to make our Saviour JESUS CHRIST ſpeak to his Church with more effeminate ſentiments, and more laſcivious expreſſions than CATULLUS uſed for LESBIA, and OVID for CORINNA: in verſes more tender than thoſe of PETRARCH for LAURA; and more gallant than thoſe of VOITURE for BELIZA. Neither do I think that SOLOMON ſpoke to a Wife: a dear Miſtreſs muſt undoubtedly be the object of ſuch Love, ſuch Raptures, ſuch Eagerneſs. However, he loved leſs than he was belov'd: and he knew by experience that the Women were more paſſionate than the Men. This is a truth which even the Holy Scripture has thought fit to confirm: for, to expreſs the ſentiments which DAVID and JONATHAN had one for the other, it ſays, *they loved one another with the Love of a Woman*[a]: to denote the tendereſt Love.

SOLOMON, in the vigour of his Age, ſhew'd leſs tenderneſs and ſincerity in his Affections and Amours. He made uſe even of the fame of his Wiſdom to make himſelf belov'd. 'Tis by that means he got ſo much Gold from the Queen of SHEBA, a Princeſs ſo fondly intoxicated with his Wiſdom, that ſhe left her Kingdom to ſee a Sage. When SOLOMON grew in years, he alter'd his conduct with the Fair. Having loſt the merit of pleaſing, he purſued that of obeying. He might have commanded, and forc'd Love, but would not be beholden for it to Power; and endeavour'd by ſuppleneſs and ſubmiſſion to make up his paſt Endearments.

[a] *In the 2d book of Samuel Chap. i. ver. 26. There is in the Hebrew,* Your Love for me was extraordinary, it exceeded the Paſſion of Women. *Our Tranſlation ſays,* Thy Love to me was wonderful, paſſing the Love of Women. *David ſpeaks of his dear Jonathan, whom he had lately loſt.*

dearments. Tho a King, tho a wiſe Man, he becomes a ſlave to his Miſtreſſes in his old Age; being of opinion, that in that melancholy and unfortunate period of our Lives, we ought, as far as poſſible, to ſteal away, as it were, from our ſelves; and that 'tis better for us to give up our ſelves to the charms of a Beauty that enchants our ills, than to ſad Reflections and frightful Imaginations.

I am not ignorant that SOLOMON has been cenſured for this laſt conduct: but tho his Reaſon appear'd weaken'd, he was nevertheleſs wiſe with reſpect to himſelf. He thereby ſoften'd his ſorrow, ſooth'd his pains, diverted the ills he could not overcome; and Wiſdom, which could no longer find out means to make him happy, made good uſe of diverſions to render him leſs miſerable. We ſcarce begin to grow old, but we begin to be diſpleaſed with our ſelves, thro' a diſguſt of our ſelves, which ſecretly grows within us. Then our Soul, void of Self-love, is eaſily filled with the love of external objects; and ſuch of theſe as would formerly have pleas'd us but indifferently, thro' the reſiſtence they met with from our own ſentiments, charm and captivate us thro' our weakneſs. Hence it comes to paſs, that Miſtreſſes diſpoſe of their old Lovers, and Wives of old Husbands, as they pleaſe: hence it was that SYPHAX abandon'd himſelf to the will of SOPHONISBA, and that AUGUSTUS was govern'd by LIVIA. And not to fetch all my examples from Antiquity, this made Monſieur DE SENECTERRE[1], a perſon worthy to be named with Kings and Emperors, upon the bare ſcore of being a man of true honour; this, I ſay, made that Courtier, who was equally wiſe, nice, and polite, ſupinely give way to the fondneſs of

[1] *Father to the Mareſchal of la Ferté.*

of a young Woman he had married in his latter days. *If you knew*, ſaid he to his Friends, *the condition of a perſon of my Age, who has nothing but himſelf to entertain in his Solitude, you would not wonder at my reſolution to have a Companion that pleaſed me, let the purchaſe coſt what it will.* For my part, I never blamed him for it: and indeed, how can one cenſure what SOLOMON heretofore, and the Mareſchal D'ESTRE'ES † of late years, have authoriz'd by their examples? However, in ſpite of all theſe Authorities, I ſhould have a great eſteem for a man who ſhould have ſtrength enough to preſerve the taſte of Liberty to the end of his Life.

Not that a full independency is always to be commended: for, ſuch free and diſengaged Gentlemen, often become indifferent and ungrateful. Let us avoid the two extremes of abſolute Subjection, and entire Freedom; and content our ſelves with an eaſy and honourable intercourſe, as agreeable to our Friends as to our ſelves. If any thing more is required of me than a hearty concern, and ſincere endeavours, for the intereſt of thoſe I love; any thing more than my ſmall aſſiſtance, as weak as 'tis, when they are in diſtreſs; or more than diſcretion in converſation, and ſecrecy in affairs of moment, let them ſeek for a Friend elſewhere; for I can afford them no more.

Violent Paſſions are unequal, and portend the diſtraction of change. In Love, we muſt leave thoſe exceſſes for the POLEXANDER's and the CYRUS's of our *Romances*: and in Friendſhip, for ORESTES and PYLADES of our *Plays*. Theſe are things we read, and ſee repreſented, which are not to be found in the commerce and practice of the

† *The Mareſchal d'Eſtrées married to his third Wife, at 91 years of Age, Gabriele de Longueval, Daughter to M. Manicamp.*

the world. And indeed, 'tis well they are not; for they would produce very extravagant adventures.

What did ORESTES ever do, that great and illuſtrious example of Friendſhip? what did he ever do, I ſay, that ought not to ſtrike us with horror? He kill'd his own Mother, murder'd PYRRHUS, and fell into ſuch ſtrange convulſions of fury, that it coſt ſome Players their Lives [5], who endeavour'd to top his Character. Let us carefully obſerve the nature of thoſe entire Friendſhips, and Engagements which are ſo cry'd up, and we ſhall find them to be made up of ſullen black Melancholy; the chief ingredient in the compoſition of all Manhaters. And indeed, the reducing ones ſelf to love but one Perſon, is a diſpoſition to hate all the reſt: and what is taken for an admirable virtue with reſpect to a private perſon, is a great crime towards all the world. He that makes us loſe the converſation of the reſt of mankind, by deſerting them as he has done, makes us loſe more than he is worth, let his merit be never ſo great. Let us pretend to as great diſintereſtedneſs as we pleaſe; let us confine all our deſires to the purity and excellence of our Paſſion, conceiving no good but what reſults from it: yet, we ſhall languiſh and pine in this refined Friendſhip, unleſs we draw from general Society, thoſe conveniencies and delights that animate private Converſation.

The Union of two Perſons entirely devoted to one another: that ſublime union wants yet the aſſiſtance of foreign things to excite the taſte of Pleaſure, and the ſenſe of Joy. Notwithſtanding all

[5] *Montfleuri, a celebrated French Player, made ſuch extraordinary efforts in acting the part of Oreſtes in Racine's* Andromache, *that he fell ſick upon it, and died. Mondori, another French Tragedian, had the ſame Fate in the repreſentation of Triſtan's* Mariana.

all the boaſted ſympathy between them, the participation of Counſels and Secrets, it will hardly yield ſatisfaction in proportion to the vexation and uneaſineſs it occaſions. 'Tis in the intercourſe of the world, and amongſt diverſions and buſineſs, that the moſt agreeable and profitable Friendſhips are form'd. I ſet a greater value upon the correſpondence between the Mareſchal D'ESTRE'ES and Monſieur DE SENECTERRE, who liv'd fifty years at Court in an uninterrupted intimacy; I more eſteem the confidence the Prince DE TURENNE had in the Marquis DE RUVIGNY, for forty years together, than thoſe Friendſhips ſo often inſtanc'd, and never practis'd amongſt men. As nothing contributes more to the happineſs of Life than Friendſhip, ſo nothing diſturbs its repoſe ſo much as Friends, if we have not judgment enough to chuſe them well. Importunate friends make us wiſh they were indifferent, ſo they were more agreeable. The moroſe give us more uneaſineſs by their humour, than they do us good by their ſervices. The imperious tyrannize over us: we muſt hate whatever they do, be it never ſo agreeable; we muſt love what they love, tho we think it nauſeous and diſpleaſing. We muſt do violence to our Nature; enſlave our Judgment; renounce our Taſte; and under the fair name of *Complaiſance*, pay a general ſubmiſſion to all they think fit to impoſe upon us with authority. Jealous friends are an inſupportable plague: they hate all Advice that is not of their own giving: and as they are angry at all the good that happens to us without their interpoſition, ſo they rejoice at all the ill that befals us by following the directions of others. There are men in the world, that make profeſſion of Friendſhip, and value themſelves upon taking our parts at random, and upon all occaſions: and ſuch vain Friends ſerve for nothing elſe but to incenſe the world againſt us by their imprudent

dent conteſts. There are others that juſtify us when no body accuſes us; who by their indiſcreet zeal, bring us into affairs where we had nothing to do; and draw inconveniences upon us, which we would willingly avoid. Let who pleaſe be contented with ſuch Friends. As for me, I am not ſatisfy'd with a man's good intention, that proves to my prejudice: I would have it attended with Diſcretion and Prudence. A man's Affection makes me no amends for the miſchief his Raſhneſs has done me. I return him thanks for his impertinent zeal, and adviſe him to ſeek to be applauded for it amongſt Fools. If the light of the underſtanding does not guide the motions of the heart, Friends are more apt to vex and diſquiet, than to pleaſe us; and more capable to hurt, than to ſerve us.

In the mean time, we hear nothing talk'd of but the Heart, in all the diſcourſes about Love and Friendſhip. Poets become troubleſom upon this theme; Lovers tedious, and Friends ridiculous. We ſee nothing in our Plays but King's Daughters yield the Heart, but refuſe the Hand; or Princeſſes that give the Hand, but cannot conſent to yield the Heart. Lovers become nauſeous by perpetually demanding the ſincerity of the Heart; and Friends ſetting up for affected Preciſians, challenge it for their due as well as Lovers. This betrays a very imperfect knowledge of the nature of it: whereas for a little irregular heat, for ſome unequal and uncertain tenderneſs it may ſometimes afford, there's no caprice, ingratitude, and infidelity, but we ought to apprehend from it.

Begging pardon of the whimſies of Poets, and imaginations of Painters, we call Love very improperly *blind*. LOVE is a Paſſion of which the heart makes generally an ill uſe. The Heart is a blind guide which leads us into all our errors. 'Tis that which prefers a fool before a man of ſenſe, that

makes

makes us doat on ugly Objects, and disown very lovely ones; that bestows it self on the most deform'd, and refuses it self to the most beautiful. 'Tis that, in short, that sets JOCONDE's friend a rambling, thro' the jealousy of a Dwarf [6].

'Tis that which disorders the most regular; that bereaves the reserved and discreet of their Virtue, and undermines the Devotion of the greatest saints among the fair Sex. It pays as little regard to rules in a Convent, as to duty in a private Family; 'tis faithless to a Husband, but much more so to a Lover: it discomposes the former, and distracts the latter. It acts without either council or knowledge: it rebels against Reason, that should be the guide; and being secretly moved by hidden springs it does not conceive, it bestows and withdraws its affections without reason; engages it self without design; breaks off without observing any decorum; and, in short, occasions strange follies, that make a great deal of noise in the world, and equally disgrace all the parties concern'd in them.

This is the common fate of Love and Friendship grounded on the Heart. As for those just and reasonable ties over-ruled by Judgment, there's no rupture to be apprehended: for either they last for life, or insensibly wear off with discretion and decency. It is certain that Nature has placed in our hearts a Loving Faculty, (if I may so speak) some secret principle of Affection, some hidden stock of Tenderness, which opens and communicates it self in time. But the use of it has been no farther receiv'd and authoriz'd amongst men, than as it may render life more easy and happy. 'Tis upon this score that EPICURUS recommended it so much to his Disciples: That CICERO exhorts us to it by

[6] *See in the Tales or* Contes de la Fontaine, *the Tale call'd* Joconde.

by arguments, and invites us to it by ſeveral examples: That SENECA, as ſtern and rigid as he is, becomes ſoft and tender as ſoon as he begins to ſpeak of Friendſhip: That MONTAIGNE refines upon SENECA in more lively expreſſions: and That GASSENDUS ſets forth the advantages of that Virtue, and as far as in him lies, diſpoſes his Readers to acquire them.

All men of ſenſe, honeſty, and good breeding, agree with Philoſophers; upon this foundation, that *Friendſhip* ought to contribute more than any thing beſides to our happineſs. And indeed, Man would hardly depart from himſelf, as it were, upon any account whatever, to unite himſelf to another, if he did not find more pleaſure in this union, than in the firſt ſentiments of ſelf-love. The whole world affords nothing more precious and valuable than the Friendſhip of wiſe men. That of others, as it is boiſterous and diſorderly, ſo it diſturbs the peace of publick Society, and the pleaſures of private Converſations. 'Tis a ſavage Friendſhip, which reaſon diſowns, and which we could wiſh to be the lot of our enemies, to be reveng'd of them for their hatred to us.

But let Friends be never ſo ſincere and regular, 'tis yet inconvenient to have too many of them. If our cares are divided into many ſtreams and channels, we can neither attend our own concerns, nor thoſe of other men, with the application they deſerve: for when the ſoul diffuſes it ſelf undiſtinguiſhably upon all objects, our Affections are ſo diſtracted, that they properly fix upon nothing. Let us live for a few that live for us: let us ſeek an eaſy and agreeable Converſation, with every body; and our private advantages with thoſe that can promote our intereſt.

A LETTER TO MONSIEUR JUSTEL.

SIR,

I AM overjoy'd to ſee you in England; the converſation of ſo knowing, and ſo inquiſitive a man as your ſelf, will afford me no little ſatisfaction: but give me leave not to approve the reſolution you have taken to quit France, ſo long as I ſee you entertain ſo tender and ſo fond a remembrance of that Kingdom. As often as I ſee you doleful and deſolate, wiſhing for Paris on the banks of our Thames, you put me in mind of the poor Iſraelites bewailing their beloved Jeruſalem on the banks of Euphrates. Either live happy in England, with the enjoyment of full Liberty of Conſcience; or make ſhift to bear ſmall hardſhips, as to Religion, in your own Country, to enjoy there all the conveniences of life.

Is it poſſible that Images, Ornaments, ſmall Ceremonies; that little Novelties, which you account ſuperſtitious,

[a] *A perſon of merit and learning, much verſed in the Knowledge of Books, who came over into England with all his family in October, 1681. Some years after he was made the King's Library-Keeper.*

perſtitious, and we religious; that certain Queſtions, debated with more ſubtlety for the reputation of the learned Diſputants, than knowledge and candour for our edification: is it poſſible, in ſhort, that differences, either ſo inconſiderable, or ſo ill grounded, ſhould diſturb the tranquillity of Nations, and occaſion the greateſt misfortunes that befal men? 'Tis a commendable thing, I confeſs, to *worſhip God in Spirit and Truth*; that firſt Being, that ſupreme Intelligence, deſerves our moſt purify'd and exalted ſpeculations: but when we endeavour to diſcharge our ſouls from all commerce with our ſenſes, can we aſſure our ſelves that an abſtracted underſtanding will not loſe it ſelf in wandering thoughts, and lead us into more Extravagancies, than it will diſcover Truths? Whence think you came all the abſurdities of ſo many Sects, but from deep meditations, wherein the mind, after its dozing and dreaming, meets with nothing but its own imaginations?

Lay aſide, Sir, your peeviſh and ſtubborn abhorrence of our Images: Images, in a manner, fix what's ſo hard to be ſettled, the Mind. Beſides, as nothing is more natural to man than imitation; ſo, of all imitations, none is ſo lawful as that of a Picture, that repreſents to us what we ought to worſhip. The idea of virtuous perſons, creates in us a love of their Virtues, and excites within us a juſt deſire to attain that perfection which they arrived to. There are emulations of ſanctity, as well as jealouſies of glory: and if a Picture of ALEXANDER animated the ambition of CESAR with deſire of conquering the World; the Images of our Saints may ſurely kindle in us the ardour of their zeal, and inſpire us with that happy violence that raviſhes Heaven.

Every one knows, that NUMA prohibited all manner of Images in the Temples of the Romans, and his law was religiously observ'd for a good while: but it was afterwards thought fit to return to Nature, which can hardly forbear the representation of Objects, when the Objects themselves are absent; and the Writings of that Legislator having, by chance, been found in his sepulchre, it was judg'd more proper to burn them, than to take them up again, with the dryness of his first Institutions. The Fathers of the Church have attack'd nothing so fiercely among the Heathens, as figures and images; which they called *Gods of wood and stone, painted Deities, vain contrivances of fancy, impious handy-works of men.* 'Tis true, that Heathenism was scarce suppress'd, and Christian Religion settled, when the use of representations, tho formerly so much exclaim'd against, was resumed, and a great Council which was held some time after, order'd them to be reverenc'd *.

I own that the *Old Testament* did not allow the forming any thing that look'd like the resemblance of God. The almighty Being had drawn himself in the great work of the Universe. The Heavens, the Sun, the Stars, the Elements, were the images of his immensity and power; the wonderful Order of Nature, express'd his wisdom to us: our Understanding, which is desirous to know every thing, found in it self a kind of idea of his infinite intelligence; and this was all that could be imagined of a GOD, who discover'd himself to Men no other way but by his works. But the case is alter'd under the dispensation of the New Testament. Since God made himself Man for our redemption, we may lawfully make to our selves Images of him,

* *The second Council of Nice, held in the year 787, by the Intrigues of the Empress Irene.*

whereby we may be exalted to acknowledge his goodneſs and love. And indeed, if they were condemned as *Hereticks* who deny'd his Humanity, is it not a ſtrange abſurdity to call us *Idolaters*, for loving to ſee it repreſented? We are commanded ever to have his Paſſion in our thoughts, always to meditate on his Sufferings; and yet ſome, it ſeems, would make it criminal for us, the having of Images that keep up the remembrance of them. They would have the image of his Death to be ever preſent to our mind, and yet will not allow any before our eyes.

Your averſion for the Ornaments of our Prieſts, and of our Churches, has no better foundation. You know, Sir, that GOD himſelf condeſcended to ordain even the Fringe that belonged to the habit of the High-Prieſt. Our Pontifical Habits come far ſhort of thoſe uſed in the Jewiſh œconomy; and you would hardly forgive our Biſhops, ſhould they officiate at Maſs with the fine ornaments of a *Breaſt-plate* and *little Bells*. As for the pomp of our Churches, you have reaſon to call it vain, if you compare it to the ſolid magnificence of the Temple of SOLOMON, in which Gold and Silver might have been uſed inſtead of Stone, towards the rearing up of that ſumptuous ſtructure. Nor is your auſterity leſs wild in the ſilencing our Muſick, than in condemning our Images. You ought to remember that DAVID recommended nothing ſo earneſtly to the Jews, as the celebrating of the Praiſes of the Almighty with all ſorts of inſtruments. Muſick in Churches exalts the Soul, purifies the Mind, moves the Heart, inſpires and raiſes Devotion.

When a Myſtery or a Miracle comes in queſtion, you will admit of nothing but Senſe and Reaſon: but in natural things, that conduce to Devotion, Senſe and Reaſon are your enemies. There you

aſcribe all to Nature, here to Grace; there we can alledge nothing ſupernatural but you laugh at it: here we offer nothing human to you, but you think it profane and impious.

Diviſions and Controverſies have diſturbed the peace of mankind but too long. Agree with us about Ceremonies lawfully eſtabliſh'd, and we will join with you in exclaiming againſt Abuſes that have crept in. As for inſtance, againſt baſe intereſt, ſordid gain, and ſnares laid either for the weakneſs of women, or the ſimplicity of ſuperſtitious and credulous men. Let them endeavour to grow pure, who are reproach'd with Corruption; let them who have the vanity to think themſelves pure, bear with ſmall inſenſible alterations, to which human nature is led by neceſſity. Let not, on the one hand, a Roman Catholick be deſtroy'd as an *Idolater*; nor, on the other, a Proteſtant burnt as a *Heretick*. Nothing is more reaſonable, than for a man to adore what he believes to be GOD; nor any thing leſs criminal, than not to adore what he looks upon to be a bare SIGN; and I cannot imagine how this different way of believing could be the occaſion of ſo much barbarity, in a Religion altogether founded upon Love and Charity. If theſe are the effects of zeal, I'd fain know what thoſe of fury and madneſs can be?

One part of the Fathers has ſtuck to the literal ſenſe of theſe words, *This is my Body*; the other has taken them in a figurative ſenſe, in a Country where almoſt every thing was ſpoken in figures. The truth of what I ſay is moſt evidently prov'd by the Books of M. ARNAULD, and M. CLAUDE, wherein, as ſoon as M. ARNAULD brings in a paſſage out of any of the Fathers, all the wit and dexterity of M. CLAUDE are ſcarce able to evade it; and when the latter inſtances in another that favours his Opinion, all the force and vehemence

of M. ARNAULD cannot overthrow the argument of M. CLAUDE. This diverſity of opinion is manifeſt among the Fathers; and 'tis but having either a moderate penetration, to be ſenſible of it, or a little ſincerity to own it. Nevertheleſs, Sir, this difference did not break the communion of the Church; and all thoſe Fathers went religiouſly together to receive the bleſſings that are promis'd us in that Sacrament.

You'll ſay, that 'tis difficult to agree with us upon the *exiſtence of a Body without either Form or Extenſion:* but is it an eaſy matter to take up with *your ſpiritual eating it*; with that *Faith which really eats the Subſtance of this ſame Body?* The difficulty is great on both ſides; and a miracle is neceſſary to ſupport your Opinion, as well as ours. Therefore ſuffer us to enjoy the belief of an unconceivable Myſtery, and we will allow you the ſtrange medley of Faith and Reaſon, which cannot be either explain'd by you, or comprehended by others. Let every one ſtick to his own Doctrine as he thinks fit; but let us agree in the uſe of the Sacrament. This was the practice of the Fathers; why ſhould not we follow their example now-a-days?

The article of *Adoration* ought not to be an obſtacle to it; ſince true *Adoration* is an inward act, dependent on you: and without the intention of your mind, and the motion of your heart, for all your kneeling down, you adore nothing. If kneeling down were worſhipping, Children would be Idolaters in England, for aſking bleſſing of their Parents. In like manner a Lover who falls at his Miſtreſs's feet, would perform an act of Idolatry; and the Spaniards, whoſe bows are a kind of kneeling down, would at leaſt be profane. 'Tis thro' a refining upon your Notions, that Quakers pull off their hats neither to Princes nor Magiſtrates, upon an apprehenſion of communicating to a Creature

the

the honour which is only due to the Creator. It is ſtrange, that your Miniſters who make open war againſt Superſtition, ſhould themſelves run into a practice more ſuperſtitious, than that which they aſcribe to the moſt ignorant Roman Catholicks. For not to pay a due honour, thro' an ill grounded ſcruple of religion, is more inexcuſable, than to over-do it, thro' miſtaken zeal.

• Had I been in the place of the Reformed in France, I would have receiv'd the Biſhop of CONDOM's [3] Book with all the favour imaginable; and having return'd that Prelate thanks for his inſinuating overtures, I would have begg'd of him to have furniſh'd me with a Catholick Religion purg'd from errors, and agreeable to his *Expoſition of the Catholick Faith.* I confeſs he would not have found it in Italy, Spain, or Portugal: but he might have procur'd it to you in France, free from the Superſtitions of the multitude, and the inſpirations of foreigners; regulated with equal wiſdom and piety by our Laws; and maintain'd with reſolution by our Parliaments. In ſuch a caſe, if you apprehend the power of the Pope, the Liberties of the Gallican Church will ſkreen you againſt it: there His Holineſs will neither be infallible, nor ſovereign umpire of your faith: he will neither diſpoſe of the Dominions of Princes, nor of the Kingdoms of Heaven at his pleaſure: in ſuch a caſe, if you become Roman, ſo far as, with lawful ſubmiſſion, to reſpect his Character and Dignity, it will be ſufficient for you to be a Frenchman, not to dread his Juriſdiction.

But if the love of Separation ſtill poſſeſſes you, and you cannot in the leaſt diſcharge your ſelf from the Opinions that are grown habitual with you, do not complain of what is taken from you, as an in-

[3] *James Benigne Boſſuet, afterwards Biſhop of Meaux.*

juſtice, but rather be thankful for what is left you, as a favour. Sullenneſs, murmuring, and oppoſition, will rather hurt than ſerve your Party: whereas a more reſpectful behaviour, and a management of your intereſt with more diſcretion than violence, might prevent the deſign of your ruin, if any ſuch thing were reſolv'd on. Controverſies do but exaſperate thoſe in power: and things are now at ſuch a paſs, that you have more need of diſcreet Leaders, than good Writers to preſerve you. Your Fore-fathers employ'd all their talents and induſtry to have Privileges granted them; now your ſkill muſt be employ'd to prevent their being taken away from you. The firſt Settlement of the Proteſtants was owing to Daringneſs, Vigour, and Reſolution: but nothing now can maintain you, but Affection, Loyalty, and Submiſſion; and ſuch as would be deſtroy'd as Rebels, may be ſuffered as dutiful Subjects. In ſhort, Sir, if your Religion be peaceable and quiet, in which you have nothing but your ſalvation in view, it is to be hoped that her modeſt and pious exerciſes will not be diſturb'd. But if, jealous and quarrelſom, ſhe attacks the eſtabliſh'd Religion, and cenſures and condemns the moſt innocent things, I will not be anſwerable for a long indulgence towards the indiſcretion of a ſtranger, both unjuſt and peeviſh in her corrections.

One of the chief points of diſcretion, and the moſt recommended, is, in all Countries to reverence the Religion of the Prince: to condemn the Religion of the Sovereign, is to condemn the Sovereign himſelf at the ſame time. An Engliſh Roman Catholic, who in his diſcourſe or writings calls the Church of England *Heretical*, treats the King of England as an *Heretick*, and inſults him in his own dominions. Likewiſe, a Proteſtant in France, who charges the Catholick Religion with *Idolatry*, does by a neceſſary conſequence accuſe the King of being

ing an *Idalater:* which the Heathen Emperors themſelves could not bear. I think nothing is more unjuſt, than to perſecute a man for his belief; but nothing appears more fooliſh to me, than for a man to draw perſecution upon himſelf.

Be rul'd by me, Sir, and peaceably enjoy whatever exerciſe you may be allow'd; and be perſuaded that Princes have as much right to the external of Religion, as Subjects have over the inward receſſes of their Conſciences.

If you duly conſider this truth, you will not account an injury the pulling down a Proteſtant Church in Languedoc: but reckon it as a favour that that of Charenton ſtands. The fury of opinions, and the obſtinacy of parties, are not for a wiſe man like your ſelf: your honour and zeal are ſet above all manner of reflection, by what you have already ſuffered; and you could not do better, than to go and fix at Paris a wandring and ſtroling Religion, which you have dragg'd long enough from Country to Country. I know very well, that conſidering the humour you are in at preſent, it would be labour loſt to exhort you to renounce it altogether: an Opinion that becomes as it were natural, by being form'd of the firſt impreſſions receiv'd in our infancy; the fondneſs a man has for antient Cuſtoms; the difficulty he finds to quit a Belief he was bred in, to embrace another which he always oppos'd; a niceneſs of honour, and a miſtaken notion of conſtancy, are chains which you will not break eaſily: but then leave your Children that free choice, which your old engagements will not ſuffer you to enjoy. You complain of the Edict, which obliges them to chuſe a Religion at ſeven years of age; and this, in my opinion, is the greateſt favour that could be done them: for thereby they are reſtor'd to their Country, which you robb'd them of; they are reinſtated in the boſom of the Commonwealth, from

whence you drew them, and they resume their birthrights to Honours and Dignities, from which you excluded them. Do not envy them, Sir, those advantages you have neglected; and keeping to your self your Opinions and Misfortunes, leave Providence to take care of their Religion and fortune.

What father does not endeavour to possess his children with a zeal for his Party, as well as his Religion? And how can any man tell what will be the result of this zeal, whether it will turn to fury or piety? whether it will produce crimes or virtues? In this uncertainty, Sir, resign all to the disposal of a Law, which has no other end than the publick good, and the particular advantages of your families. And indeed, is it not better to receive one's Religion from the Laws of one's Country, than either from the liberty of one's fancy, or the animosity of a faction a man happens to be engag'd in, than to make it the first article of Faith, to hate the *Papists*, as you unjustly call us? Be wise and discreet, tho the passionate should call you lukewarm for it; it becomes you to spend in peace the remainder of your days. God Almighty will reward you for your patience; for he loves the wisdom he inspires, but cannot endure indiscreet zeal, which either occasions, or foolishly draws a man into trouble.

THOUGHTS, REFLECTIONS, AND MAXIMS.

Upon Health.

I.

IF you have any regard for the niceneſs of your Palate, or concern for your Health, you will eat none but plain Meat, without any mixture, but exquiſite by its natural goodneſs, and the curioſity of your choice.

II.

Let all ſtrong Soups, Gravy-ſauce, Ragoos, Kickſhaws, and generally all made diſhes, be baniſh'd your table, to prevent Diſtempers unknown heretofore, during the ſimplicity of meals.

III.

Variety of Wines may, ſometimes, be agreeable; never wholeſom: be temperate, and nice; drink but

but little wine, but excellent; and keep to the ſame as long as poſſible.

IV.

Champagne Wines are the beſt; don't keep too long thoſe of Ay; neither drink too ſoon thoſe of Rheims. Cold preſerves the ſpirits of River-Wines; heat takes away the taſte of the ſoil of Mountain-Wines.

V.

You can't be too careful of your Diet, nor too cautious againſt Phyſick. A moderate diet entertains health and pleaſure; Phyſick is an ill preſent, in view of an uncertain good to come.

VI.

Pleaſures and Diet ought to be in a kind of concert, and bear a juſt proportion to one another. Immoderate pleaſures put Nature into diſorder; but then a ſparing and dry way of living dulls the ſpirits, and inſenſibly extinguiſhes them.

Upon Love.

VII.

Let us have a ſufficient ſtock of Love to animate us; but not enough to diſturb our repoſe. The heart was given us to love, which is an agreeable motion; not to ſuffer, which is a painful ſenſation.

VIII.

'Tis againſt the intention of Nature, to make that our torment, which ſhe deſign'd for our pleaſure and comfort,

IX.

IX.

Voluptuous Women are leſs ſenſible of the motions of their Hearts, than of the impulſe of their lewd Appetites: the finical or preciſe, to preſerve the purity of their hearts, tenderly love their Gallants, without enjoyment; and ſolidly enjoy their Huſbands, whom they hate.

Upon Devotion.

X.

Amorous Ladies, who give up themſelves to God, generally make him no other preſent, than of an empty idle Soul that ſeeks to employ it ſelf; ſo that their Devotion may be call'd a new paſſion, wherein a tender heart, that thinks to be penitent, does only change the object of its love.

XI.

When we begin to turn devout, it is eaſier for us to love God, than to ſerve him well. The reaſon of it is, becauſe we ſtill retain a heart uſed to Love; and a ſoul that had a great familiarity with Vice. The heart finds nothing new in its motions; but a diſorderly ſoul finds a great alteration in the ſentiments of Virtue; ſo that whatever change there may appear to be, a man is ſtill the ſame; he loves as he loved: and is unjuſt, proud, revengeful, and ſelfiſh as he was before.

XII.

True Devotion is reaſonable, kind, and beneficent: the more it ties us to God, the more it inclines us to live well with Men.

XIII.

XIII.

The Life of Monks is ſtill the ſame, as to the Rules of their Order: but unequal thro' the inequality of the temper their minds are in.

XIV.

In a religious Houſe, Doubt over-rules ſome hours, and Perſuaſion ſome others: there are times when a man regrets the pleaſures he has loſt; and times when he laments the ſins he has committed.

On Death.

XV.

The beſt reaſon one has to reſolve to die, is, becauſe he cannot help it. Philoſophy gives us force to diſſemble the ſenſe of Death, but does not remove it: Religion makes us more fearful and leſs confident.

XVI.

All things duly weigh'd and conſider'd, Wiſdom rather conſiſts in making us live eaſy and quiet, than in making us die with conſtancy.

XVII.

Philoſophical Deaths afford excellent matter of diſcourſe to the Living, but little comfort to the Dying:

Expecting our ſevere and common fate,
Let us love Life, but not fear Death.

A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN,

On her deſign of retiring into a Convent.

I Know not, Madam, whether the title of *Friendſhip without Friendſhip*, which you have beſtowed on my Writing [1], is proper for it; but I'm ſure it ſuits but ill with my ſentiments, thoſe particularly which you excite in me. Since that unlucky evening in which you acquainted me with the fatal Reſolution you ſeem willing to take, I had not one moment's repoſe; or rather you have caſt me into continual pain, which is ſomething more violent than a bare privation of reſt.

How is it poſſible for you to leave perſons who are charm'd with you, and who adore you; friends that love you more than they love themſelves, to go and hunt after unknown people you will not like, and who perhaps will inſult you? Do you conſider, Madam, that you are going to throw your ſelf into a Convent, which the Conſtable's Lady [2],

[1] *See above, pag.* 261.

Lady [a], your ſiſter, abhorr'd? If ſhe returns thither, 'tis becauſe ſhe muſt either chuſe that, or Death; whereas, in order to go to it, you will leave a Court where you are eſteemed; where the affection of a gracious and good-natur'd King affords you a kind treatment; where all ſenſible and judicious perſons have both a reſpect and friendſhip for you. Think well upon it, Madam: The moſt happy day you will paſs in a Nunnery, will not be worth the moſt melancholy you paſs here at home.

Indeed, if you were touch'd, and acted by a particular impulſe of divine Grace, that ſhould prompt you to devote your ſelf to God's ſervice, the hardſhip of your Condition might be excuſed by the ardour of your Zeal, which would render every thing ſupportable to you: but you are neither convinc'd, nor affected; and you muſt even learn to believe in him, whom you are going to ſerve ſo auſterely. You will not only meet with all the hardſhips that Nuns undergo, but will miſs the Spouſe that comforts them. To you every ſort of ſpouſe is odious; not only ſuch a one as is to be found abroad in the world, but even ſuch a one as is to be found in a Monaſtery. The being one day in doubt about the happineſs of another life, is ſufficient to caſt into deſpair the chaſteſt maid in a Nunnery: for Faith alone ſtrengthens and ſupports her, and enables her to bear the mortifications ſhe undergoes. Who knows, Madam, whether you will believe one quarter of an hour what ſhe muſt ever believe to avoid being unhappy? Who knows, whether the idea of a promis'd Felicity will ever be powerful enough to bear you up againſt the ſenſe of preſent ills?

Nothing is more reaſonable to ſuch as are ſincerely convinced, than to live under that auſterity which

[a] *Marie Mancini, one of the Dutcheſs of Mazarin's ſiſters, who was married to Prince Colonna, Conſtable of the Kingdom of Naples.*

which they believe neceſſary for their arrival at the fruition of eternal bliſs; and nothing is more juſt in them who are not convinced, than to indulge their eaſe here below, and to taſte with moderation every pleaſure for which they have any reliſh. For this reaſon, thoſe among the Philoſophers who believ'd the Immortality of the Soul, made no account of the delights of this world; and ſuch of them who after this life expected no other, have placed their ſovereign Good in pleaſure. You, Madam, profeſs a Philoſophy entirely new: in oppoſition to EPICURUS to purſue Pain, Mortifications, and Anguiſh; and in oppoſition to SOCRATES, you expect no reward from Virtue. Without much Religion you are going to profeſs a religious Life: you deſpiſe this World, and don't ſet much value upon the other. Unleſs therefore you have found out a third World created purpoſely for you, there is no way left to juſtify your conduct.

We muſt, Madam, we muſt be convinced before we lay a reſtraint upon ourſelves: we muſt not ſuffer without knowing for whom we ſuffer. In a word, we muſt earneſtly endeavour to know God, before we deny ourſelves. 'Tis in the midſt of the Univerſe where the contemplation of the wonders of Nature will lead you to his knowledge on whom it depends. The ſight of the Sun will make you comprehend the greatneſs and magnificence of him that form'd it; that wonderful and juſt Order, which cements and entertains all things, will bring you acquainted with his Wiſdom. In ſhort, Madam, in this World, which you deſign to leave, God lies all open and ready explain'd to our thoughts; whereas he lies ſo cloſe in Monaſteries, that he rather conceals than manifeſts himſelf; and is ſo diſguis'd by the mean and unworthy forms under which he is repreſented, that the moſt en-

enlighten'd have much ado to know him. However, an old Abbeſs will continually ſpeak to you about him, whom, of all things, ſhe has the leaſt knowledge of: ſhe'll command you to do ſome ſilly things by way of Penance; and an exact obedience muſt anſwer the command, let it be never ſo ridiculous. Your ghoſtly Father will aſſume no leſs an aſcendant over you: and your Reaſon thus humbled, will find itſelf a ſlave to preſumptuous ignorance. Reaſon, that ſecret character or image of God, which he has imprinted on our ſouls, will repreſent you as a rebel, if you do not reverence in this Director of your Conſcience, the imbecillity of human nature. Too ſimple and credulous Nuns will diſguſt you, and you'll be offended at the libertine and the wanton. You will find there the crimes of the world, whoſe pleaſures you have forſaken.

Hitherto you have liv'd in grandeur, and enjoy'd all the delights that attend it. You were brought up as a Queen, and you deſerv'd to be one. Being the Heireſs of a Miniſter who govern'd the Univerſe, you brought a greater fortune to your Husband, than all the Queens of EUROPE together, to their Royal Conſorts. One day robb'd you of all that vaſt eſtate: but your merit ſupply'd the loſs of your fortune, and made you live with more magnificence in foreign countries, than you would have lived in ours. Curioſity, delicacy, cleanlineſs, nice dreſs, conveniencies of life, and pleaſures have not abandon'd you. If your diſcretion has forbidden you voluptuous enjoyments, you have yet this advantage, that no favours were ever ſo deſired as yours.

Now, Madam, what will you find in a Nunnery? a ſevere prohibition of all that nature reaſonably requires; of all that humanity allows: a cell, a hard bed, more deteſtable diet, naſty ſtinking cloaths,

cloaths, ſhall make up all your delights. You'll be your ſole attendant, the only perſon to humour and pleaſe you, amidſt ſo many things that will diſpleaſe you; nor will you, perhaps, be in a condition to have for your ſelf the moſt ſecret complaiſance for ſelf-love; perhaps your Beauty, being become altogether uſeleſs, will not diſcover it ſelf, either to your own eyes, or thoſe of others.

However, Madam, this wonderful Beauty of yours, this great ornament of the Univerſe, was not beſtow'd upon you to be hid. You owe your ſelf to the publick, to your friends, to your ſelf. You were made to pleaſe your ſelf, to pleaſe all; to diſſipate ſorrow, to inſpire joy, to revive in general all that languiſhes. When the ugly and the fooliſh throw themſelves into Nunneries, 'tis a divine inſpiration that makes them quit the world, where they can but diſgrace its author: but in you, Madam, 'tis a downright temptation from the Devil, who envying God's Glory, cannot bear the admiration, which the moſt excellent of his Works raiſes in us. Twenty whole years ſpent in ſinging of Pſalms, and Anthems in the Choir, will not contribute ſo much to that Glory, as will one day in which your Beauty lies expos'd to the ſight of the world. The ſhewing your ſelf is your true Vocation: 'tis the ſervice you owe God; 'tis the moſt ſuitable worſhip you can pay him. If time has power to deſtroy the excellent harmony and proportion of your features, as well as thoſe of others; if it ſhould one day ruin that Beauty we now admire: then indeed, you may retire from the world; and after having fulfill'd the will of him that form'd you, go, and ſing his praiſes in a Nunnery. But, be ſure to follow the diſpoſition he has made of your life; for if you foreſtal the hour he has ap-

pointed for your Retreat, you ſhall betray his intentions, by a ſecret complaiſance for his enemy.

If you hearken to this enemy, one of your greateſt misfortunes will be, that no body ſhall be acceſſary to them but your ſelf. My Lady COLONNA, your ſiſter, charges hers on the violences that are offer'd her. She has the cruelty of a Husband that compels her, the injuſtice of a Court that ſupports him, and a thouſand other grievances, either true or falſe, to complain of. But you, Madam, are the only cauſe of your hard fate, and can accuſe none but your own error. God makes his will known to you thro' my mouth, and you will not give me the hearing. He makes uſe of my arguments to ſave you, and you conſult nothing but your ruin. One day, over-whelm'd with all the miſeries I deſcribe to you, you will, but too late, think on him who endeavour'd to prevent them.

You are flatter'd, perhaps, by the noiſe your Retreat will make; and by an extravagant Vanity you think nothing is more illuſtrious, than to rob the world of the greateſt Beauty that ever was in it, when others beſtow nothing on God, but either natural Deformity, or the ruins of a worn-out Face. But how long have you preferr'd the emptineſs of opinion before the reality of things? And who, after all, will warrant you that your Reſolution will not be accounted as fooliſh as extraordinary? Who can tell, but it will be look'd upon as the return of a wandring and travelling humour? Or, that people will imagine that you go three hundred leagues in queſt of an Adventure, divine indeed, if you pleaſe to call it ſo, but ſtill an Adventure.

You hope, to find ſome comfort in my Lady COLONNA's Converſation: but, if I am not miſtaken, that comfort will not laſt long. After you have talk'd three or four days of France and Italy,

of the King's paſſion, and the timorouſneſs of the Cardinal your Uncle [3]; of what you are like to be, and what you are at preſent; after having exhauſted your memory of what paſs'd at the Conſtable's Houſe, of your going out of Rome, and of your unfortunate Voyages and Travels, you will find your ſelf coop'd up in a Convent; and your Captivity, the hardſhip of which you will by that time begin to feel, will make you reflect on the ſweet Liberty you enjoy'd in England. Thoſe very things that now ſeem tireſome to you, will appear charming to your Imagination; and what you have quitted thro' diſguſt, will revive, and tantalize your appetite. Then, Madam, then, what force of mind muſt you be miſtreſs of, to comfort your ſelf under the ſenſe of preſent ills, and loſt pleaſures?

I grant, my gueſſes may prove falſe, and my conjectures ill-grounded. I grant, my Lady COLONNA's Converſation may ever be agreeable to you: but who will warrant that it will be in your power freely to enjoy it? 'Tis one of the Rules obſerv'd in religious Houſes, not to permit any cloſe correſpondence between perſons that take delight in each other's company; becauſe the union of private perſons is a kind of breach of the obligations one has contracted with the whole ſociety. Beſides, the Conſtable's care and vigilance may extend ſo far, as to prevent a communication, that will raiſe a thouſand chimerical fears in the head of a ſuſpicious man, who has too much offended. I do not mention the caprice and freaks of an Abbeſs, nor the ſecret jealouſies of Nuns, who will do all the ſpite they can, to a perſon

[3] *The King of France, before he married the Infanta of Spain, was paſſionately in love with my Lady Colonna, (then a Maid); but Cardinal Mazarin, her Uncle, would not conſent to that Match, for fear the ſame ſhould be reſented by the Princes of the Blood, and Nobility of France.*

whoſe merit will drown theirs. Thus, Madam, it may be your fate, that after you have turn'd Nun, and live with your ſiſter, you will be ſcarce allow'd to ſee her; and ſo you will either be alone with your melancholy thoughts, or in a crowd, amidſt impertinence, error, and folly; tired with Sermons in a language you little underſtand, fatigu'd with Matins that will diſturb your morning-reſt, wearied with the continual habit of ſaying Veſpers, and the troubleſom mumbling of a Roſary.

What ſhall I do then, will you ſay? preſerve your Reaſon, Madam; for you'll make your ſelf unhappy if you loſe it. What a prodigious loſs is the want of that exquiſite diſcernment and ſound judgment you were miſtreſs of? Have you committed ſo great a crime againſt your ſelf, thus to inflict ſo ſevere a puniſhment on your own perſon? And then what reaſon have you to complain of your friends, thus to exerciſe ſo cruel a revenge upon them? The Italians murther their enemies; but their friends eſcape their ſavage way of doing themſelves juſtice.

Madam DE BEVERWEERT and I, have already received mortal ſtrokes; the very thought of your ſufferings, has occaſion'd ours; and I find my ſelf at preſent the moſt miſerable of Men, becauſe you are going to make your ſelf the moſt miſerable of all Women. When I go to ſee her in the morning, we look upon each other ſpeechleſs, for a quarter of an hour; and this mournful ſilence, is ever attended with our tears. Take pity on us, Madam, if you'll have none for your ſelf. One may go ſo far as to deprive one's ſelf, of the conveniencies of life, for the ſake of friends: we only deſire you to forbear its torments, and ſhan't we obtain our requeſt? You muſt needs be naturally very hard-hearted, ſince you are the firſt that feels

the effects, of your own rigour. Think, Madam, think ſeriouſly, on what I tell you: you ſtand upon the brink of ruin: one ſtep forward, and you are undone; one ſtep backward, and you are ſafe. Your good, or bad Fortune, is in your own hands: have but the courage to be happy, and you will infallibly be ſo.

If you leave the World, as you ſeem reſolv'd, my comfort is, that I ſhall not ſtay long in it: Nature, kinder than you, will ſoon put a period to my melancholy life. In the mean time, Madam, your commands will ſupercede hers, when you pleaſe; for the right ſhe has over me, is ſubordinate, to that I have reſigned to you. There's no Voyage I ſhall not undertake to be in your company; and if you ſhall ſtrain your rigour ſo far, as even to deny me that favour, I ſhall go and hide my ſelf in ſome deſart, being utterly incapable to reliſh any Converſation but yours. In that Solitude, your image will ſupply all other objects; there I ſhall diſengage me from, and forget my ſelf, if I may ſo ſpeak, that I may eternally think on you. There I ſhall learn to die; and my laſt Sighs, will acquaint the whole world, with the power of you charms, and merits, and the depth of my affliction.

TO THE SAME:

On the Death of her Lover[1].

I WAS told you were going to leave England, and tho yet uncertain where to fix your Reſidence, that you were reſolved to go out of the Country, where you ought to ſtay. In the name of wonder, Madam, what do you mean? what are you going to do? You will give your enemies invincible reaſons againſt your ſelf, and deprive your friends of all means to ſerve you. You will, by this new ramble, revive the dormant fault of all the former; and ruin all your preſent and future intereſt. But, ſay you, can one appear in publick, after this ſtrange unlucky adventure? But, anſwer I, how can one hide one's ſelf without making a bare misfortune a crime. 'Tis certain our ill conduct often turns misfortunes into faults; and I am afraid, Madam, you will find it by experience. If you continue any longer in your obſcure retreat, every one will reproach you, with what you ſeem to reproach your ſelf; and you'll be condemn'd by thouſands, who are now diſpoſed to pity you.

But after all, Madam, is the accident that has befallen you, ſo very extraordinary? I could name to you ſome modern Beauties, who have born the loſs of their Lovers with very moderate ſorrow, but that I have a greater example in ſtore for you.

HELENA,

[1] *Baron Banier, who was killed in a Duel by Prince Philip of Savoy. See the* Life of Monſieur de St. Evremond, *in the year* 1683.

HELENA, leſs beautiful than you, but next to you, the moſt beautiful woman the world ever ſaw; HELENA, cauſed both Gods and Men to fight ten years together, and was more proud of what others did for her ſake, than aſham'd of what ſhe had done herſelf. Theſe, Madam, are the Heroins, you ought to imitate; and not the DIDO's and THISBE's; thoſe wretches who have diſgrac'd Love by the deſperate extravagance of their paſſion. But what mean you by your ſorrow? To lament a dead man, is not to lament a Lover. Your Lover is now no more than a ſad and empty Object, form'd by your imagination: 'tis to be in love with your own idea; and the Lady who is in love with ALEXANDER the Great*, is as excuſable in her chimerical paſſion, as you are in yours; ſince a man who died to day, has no more to do with this world, than that famous conqueror. Therefore your ſelf are the ſubject matter of your tears; whilſt being too faithful to your affliction, you vainly endeavour to reſtore what Nature has deſtroy'd.

Then talk of his diſaſtrous fate no more;
A grief, which on your Beauty preys, give o'er:
The man you mourn for, is for ever gone,
And you're alone the ſubject of your moan.
Your raving fancy, to your ſelf unkind,
Has form'd a Fantom to diſtract your mind.

I give you the beſt Arguments in the world, both in Proſe and Verſe: but the more pains I take to comfort you, the more I find you inconſolable. Since the times of ARTEMISIA, and the Dutch-

* *See the French Play, called* Les Viſionaires, *writ by Des Marets.*

eſs of MONTMORENCI, both famous for their ſolemn affliction, and celebrated by the Mauſoleums they erected for their Husbands, no ſorrow like yours was ever ſeen. 'Tis true, it was, in a manner, enjoyn'd to you by the Directreſs of your grief[3]. No moment paſſes, but DOLORIDA[4] approaches your ears to tell you news of the other world; and there's no ſecret ſhe leaves untry'd, to entertain in your ſoul the love of the dead, and the hatred of the living. Sometimes ſhe makes uſe of a ſad and mournful countenance; ſometimes of a woful ſtory, and ſometimes, for variety-ſake, of a melancholy and lamentable ſong. And thoſe very Hymns which the Church has inſtituted to celebrate the death of our Saviour, are mournfully ſung at his nativity, when the ſame Church ordains us to rejoice.

If one ſhould obſerve in you the leaſt ſign of your being reſtor'd to your gay humour; if, by an impulſe of nature, you ſhould break out into the leaſt ſally of joy, contrary to DOLORIDA's orders, a ſevere look of hers makes you immediately return to the duty of your ſorrow: and ſuch art of grieving and lamenting is employ'd to give you a diſguſt to the world; that if the ſame melancholy methods, and gloomy application were to be uſed with Mr. TALBOT, I don't in the leaſt doubt that in a fortnight one might make a good Hermit of the moſt jovial of all men. Let therefore no body wonder at DOLORIDA's ſucceſsful machines of a ſtudied deſolation: the wonder is, you have preſerved ſo much judgment as you have done. You have enough left, Madam, in ſpite of all the endeavours that have been uſed to rob you of it entirely,

[3] *Madam de Ruz, whom the Duke of Mazarin had ſent to London with ſome young devout Ladies, in order to engage his Dutcheſs to retire into a Nunnery.*

[4] *See* Don Quixot, *Part* II. *Chap.* 36. *&c.*

tirely, in order to diſpoſe of you with more eaſe to your ruin: but nevertheleſs, do not take it ill of me, if I ſhew you the difference there is between you and your ſelf.

What would formerly have ſaid that Dutcheſs of MAZARIN, whom we knew full of wit, and penetration; what would our Madam MAZARIN have ſaid, if ſhe had ſeen a ſmall religious Flock croſs the Sea, to ſettle their wandring Sanctity in the Houſe of a perſon of Quality? And what would ſhe not have ſaid of the hoſpitable Lady, who would have entertain'd theſe pious Siſters? What would Madam MAZARIN have ſaid, if ſhe had ſeen the reverend Mother ſuperior, divide her time, between the exerciſes of piety, and her amorous lectures; between the fervency of prayers, and the eagerneſs of getting a guinea; between the pious frauds of Religion, and the cheats at Baſſet? What would ſhe have ſaid, if ſhe had ſeen thoſe young plants, that wanted moiſture, bear miraculouſly forward fruit, thro' the particular bleſſing of that houſe? Come on, little MAROTE[5], you proſelyte of their holineſſes, come and learn us ſomething of the myſtery, in which you have been initiated: ſhew your ſelf, MAROTE, and convince the publick of the efficacy of their wholeſom inſtructions. The thing is too ſerious, and too preſſing, to make a jeſt of it any longer.

In the name of God, Madam; that name which is abuſed by the Hypocrites, who in the judgment of my Lord BACON, are the great Atheiſts: in the name of God, rid your ſelf of a contagious commerce with wickedneſs and folly. You will no ſooner have freed your ſelf from it, but you'll recover all your former judgment, and retrieve your

[5] *One of the young Girls that came over with Madam de Rue, and who bore the forward fruit.*

your priſtine Reputation. Conſult ſolidly your intereſt, and wiſely your repoſe. This is all I beg of you: make your ſelf happy, and you'll do more for me than 'twere in your power to do for a Lover, let your favours be never ſo precious.

TO THE SAME:

On her deſign of leaving England.

I DO my ſelf the honour to write to you, Madam; not that I flatter my ſelf with the hope of regaining your favour; but only to have the ſatisfaction to tell you the greateſt truth in the world; which is, Madam, that you never had, nor never will have, ſo faithful a ſervant as I have been, and will ever be. 'Tis true, this fidelity of mine had nothing in view, but your intereſt. Leaving for others, to humour your fancies, the complaiſance they have at preſent to entertain your ſorrows, I conſider'd what was conducing to your good, and oppoſed what unfortunately pleaſed you to your ruin. After ſo juſt an aſſurance of my zeal, I will tell you, that you have nothing to fear in England, but thoſe who endeavour to give you a diſguſt of it: and would to God you were as truly perſuaded of the civility of the Engliſh, as they are ready to give you proofs of it on all occaſions. Shew your ſelf, Madam: for you never can hurt your ſelf ſo much, as by hiding your ſelf. But when you become acceſſible, give us leave to come to you any other way, but that curſed Apartment[1], fitter to conjure

[1] *See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *under the year* 1683.

conjure up the Ghoſt of SAMUEL, than to lead to Madam MAZARIN's Chamber. If all thoſe diſmal preparations are of ARCABONE's [2] providing, we pray God to preſerve us againſt the inchantment. But if that black melancholy proceeds from your own humour; if you think on nothing but to hurt and torment your ſelf; learn, Madam, that the greateſt cruelty is to torment ones ſelf. Who does not forgive himſelf, deſerves not to be forgiven by others: for he teaches them to be ſevere and unrelenting. Let us come to the point; for I begin to be weary of generalities.

Suppoſe your Nephew [3] ſhould loſe his Benefices; I don't deny but it is matter of grief: but you have ſuſtained greater loſſes without breaking your heart for it. A man who profeſs'd love to you, has been kill'd. 'Tis an unfortunate accident, I own it: but, bating your affliction, there's nothing very extraordinary in this adventure. Lovers are mortal, like other men. If you can make Love to be an exemption from dying, the Ladies will be peſter'd with Lovers; and there will be as many as there are Men. I know 'tis decent to mourn for the loſs of thoſe that love us; but to ſummon all that is direful to the aſſiſtance of our grief, and take thereupon deſtructive reſolutions, is what the Dead do not require from us.

Give me leave to reproach you with ſomething that's mean, but which is neceſſary to animate you to ſhake off the concernment you are in. In times of proſperity, I know, no body ſhews more Philoſophy than you. You talk more gravely than PLUTARCH; you ſpeak more Sentences than SENECA; you make more Reflections than MONTAIGNE;

[2] *A famous Enchantreſs, ſiſter to the Magician Arcalaus, in the Romance called* Amadis de Gaul.

[3] *Prince Philip of Savoy. See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *under the year* 1683.

TAIGNE: but upon the leaſt accident, upon the leaſt trouble that befals you, you are bewilder'd, and loſt to all counſel; you renounce your own reaſon, and reſign your ſelf to thoſe who have none, or whoſe intereſt lies in your ruin. 'Tis too much, Madam, 'tis too much in all conſcience to act the ſame Farce twice in one family. And why, I pray, did you wonder ſo much at my Lady COLONNA's leaving Turin, where ſhe had nothing but the dry and bare protection of the Duke of Savoy? Why, I ſay, did you ſo much wonder at it, if you can now be capable of leaving the King of England, as ſecure by his power, as ſolid by his beneficence?

Notwithſtanding all theſe clear and forcible arguments, I am ſtill afraid leſt you over-look your Intereſt; unfortunate, not to ſee in England what ſuits beſt with you; yet more unfortunate in ſeeing it too well as ſoon as you are gone out of England! You ſhall then recover the light when you want means to enjoy it. As long as you are in this Kingdom, either in Town or Country, you may mend your affairs, as bad a condition as they are in; but after you are once on board the Ship, here's no more reſource. You muſt go to places where you'll find neither ſatisfaction nor intereſt; where your imaginations will be fruſtrated; and where, to torment you, you will find the ſenſe of preſent miſery, and the remembrance of paſt felicity.

I know, Madam, you don't care to hear of Examples. But without regarding your averſion, I ſhall make bold to tell you, that the Queen of BOHEMIA[4], upon her going out of England, dragg'd about a wandring neceſſity from one Nation to another; and that MARY of MEDICIS, Mother, or Mother-in-law to three great Kings[5], went

[4] *Elizabeth Stuart, Daughter to King James* I.

[5] *Mary of Medicis, was Mother to Lewis* XIII. *and Mother-in-law to Philip* IV. *King of Spain, and Charles* I. *King of England.*

went to ſtarve at Cologne. I look upon you, Madam, with tears in my eyes, as a perſon ready to be ſacrificed, unleſs you have the force to ſave your ſelf from the Altar. Do as much for your ſelf as RACINE did for IPHIGENIA: put an ERIPHILE in your place, and come and comfort men of honour with your ſafety, and her ruin.

TO THE SAME:

On the ſame Subject.

YOU doubt not, Madam, that I am ſenſibly touch'd to ſee you leave England; but I ſhould be inconſolable, if you deſign'd to go and live either with the Princes of Germany, or the Grandees of Spain. Nothing is more natural for you, than living in France. For my own part, I would not deſire either a better Air, or a finer Country. England, however, has its conveniencies: a great many Guineas, with the liberty of enjoying them as one thinks fit.

I cannot go on with this ſort of diſcourſe. All diverſions are neceſſary to amuſe my ſorrow; but it is very difficult to make uſe of any, when it comes into my thoughts that I ſhall never ſee you again. I look upon you as a dead Perſon, with reſpect to me. All your good Qualities appear before me to affect me; and I can fix my eye on no imperfection that can comfort me. Would to God you had left me ſome reaſon to complain, more provoking than the abandoning me to my little merit. A juſt reſentment of an injury would exaſperate me againſt you;

you; but your contempt obliges me to do my ſelf an irkſome piece of juſtice, without affording me any thing to reproach you with. Pray let this Letter ſerve for an Adieu: for I ſhall not have the ſtrength to bid it by word of mouth; and I ſhall weep in my Chamber, as I do already now, to ſpare my Age the ſhame of ſhedding Tears in publick. Remember now and then an old Servant. However, I fear what I ask: for you will not remember me, but when my Predictions come to paſs; and I had rather they ſhould prove falſe, and be forgotten. As for you, Madam, you will ever be remember'd by thoſe who had the honour to know you. Thoſe you think the leaſt diſpoſed to regret you, will not forgive the reſolution you have taken to leave us. Your only enemy is your ſelf; and your ſad ideas, and melancholy attendants. If a man could look into your head, as well as on your face, he would find your brain blacken'd with the *Dead of La Trape*[1], and your other diſmal Imaginations. Farewel, Madam. The bare mentioning your affliction, would make me ſad, if I were not ſo already. Gueſs at my ſorrow and zeal for your ſervice: for 'tis not in my power to expreſs it.

For a long while, I have not taken upon me to give you counſel. Let the laſt be, to reconcile your ſelf with the Duke of MAZARIN, if you can do it with any ſafety. If there be none, return to England, to paſs ſome time in the country. I am perſuaded the King will not abandon you; and you will find more people ready to ſerve you than you imagine. As for Monaſteries, one lives wretchedly there, unleſs one becomes

[1] *There is a Book of the* Lives *of ſome Perſons that died at the Monaſtery of la Trape, and left behind them the reputation of being holy Men.*

comes crazy. All things conſider'd, 'tis better for a married woman to ſuffer with an Husband, than to ſuffer with an Abbeſs. There is more honour and virtue in it. Rid your ſelf, as faſt as you can, of the black whims that proceed from the ſpleen, and in which even your imagination has no ſhare.

SOME

OBSERVATIONS

Upon the Taſte and Judgment of the FRENCH.

ALtho the Genius of the French ſeems generally to be but mean, it is certain, that thoſe who diſtinguiſh themſelves amongſt us, are capable of the moſt noble productions: but when they know how to perform them, we know not how to admire them; and if we have done juſtice to ſome excellent work, our levity doth not ſuffer it to enjoy long the reputation we have given it. I don't at all wonder, that there is no good Taſte of things where barbarity reigns, and no judgment where Letters, Arts, and Diſcipline are loſt; it would likewiſe be ridiculous to expect a vein of fine learning, in times of darkneſs and ignorance: but that which is really ſurprizing, is, to ſee in the moſt polite Court, a true and vicious palate ſucceed by turns, and become a-la-mode, like our cloaths.

I have known conſiderable men ſometimes paſs for the ornaments of the Court, and ſometimes be thought ridiculous; to be liked again, then fall into contempt; without any alteration, either in their perſons, or their conduct. A Man retires with

with the applauſe of the whole world, who, the next day finds himſelf the ſubject of our raillery, without knowing how he came to forfeit the good opinion we had of him lately. The true reaſon is, becauſe we rarely judge of Men by ſolid advantages, which good ſenſe diſcovers; but by the faſhion, whoſe applauſe ends as ſoon as the fancy which had produced it.

The Works of Authors are ſubject to the ſame inequality of our Taſte. When I was young, THEOPHILE was admired, in ſpite of his irregularities and negligence, which made a ſhift to eſcape thro' want of a nice judgment in the Courtiers of that time. I have ſeen him ſince univerſally cried down by all the Verſifiers, without any reſpect to his fine imagination, and the happy graces of his genius. I have known the time, when the Poetry of MALHERBE was thought admirable, for the turn, the exactneſs, and the expreſſion. Not long after; he was thrown aſide, as the worſt of Poets; when riddles, burleſque, *bouts rimez*[1], carried all France before them. I have ſeen CORNEILLE loſe his reputation, if it were poſſible for him to loſe it, at the repreſentation of one of his beſt Pieces[2]. I have ſeen two of the beſt Comedians of the world[3], expoſed to all our raillery; and when the influence of this prejudice was over, they were as much admired as before. The Airs of BOISSET, which formerly ſo juſtly charmed all the Court, were ſoon left for little ballad-tunes; and LUIGI, the firſt man of the univerſe in his art, muſt come from Italy to admire them, and make us repent of this our folly, and reſtore them to that reputation, which nothing but meer whimſy had robbed them of.

[1] *A ſet of Rhimes given to a Poet in order to his filling them up in a Sonnet, or ſome other piece of Poetry.*

[2] *The* Sophonisba.

[3] *Floridor and Montfleury.*

of. If you ask me the reaſon of it, I muſt tell you, that induſtry in France ſupplies the place of the greateſt merit, and that the art of making one's ſelf valued, oftner gives us a reputation than our intrinſick value.

Since good Judges are as rare as good Authors; ſince 'tis as difficult to find judgment in one, as genius in the other, every one aims to give a reputation to that which pleaſes him; and it happens, that the multitude values that which is agreeable to their ill reliſh, or at moſt, to their indifferent underſtanding. Beſides, Novelty is a temptation from which our minds cannot eaſily defend themſelves. The Merit which we are accuſtom'd to, does not fail, in time, to raiſe our envy; and even defects are capable of ſurprizing us agreeably, in things that we never ſaw. The moſt valuable things, after they have appeared ſome time amongſt us, no longer make an impreſſion upon us as good; but diſguſt us as old: on the other ſide, things that deſerve no eſteem, are leſs often rejected as deſpicable, than deſired as new.

Not but that we have men of ſound judgment in France, who never diſlike any thing that ought to pleaſe, and are never pleas'd with what is trifling: but the multitude, either ignorant, or prepoſſeſs'd, ſtill prevails over the ſmall numbers of the knowing. Beſide, perſons of the greateſt figure ſet a value on every thing according to their fancy, and when a perſon follows the mode, he may equally eſteem thoſe things he knows, and thoſe he doth not.

There is no Country where Reaſon or Senſe is ſcarcer, than in France; but when 'tis found there, none is purer in the whole univerſe. For the moſt part indeed, we are govern'd by fancy; but a fancy ſo fine, and a caprice ſo noble, as to what regards the outſide, that Foreigners, aſhamed of their good

Senſe, as of a groſs quality, ſeek to make themſelves eſteemed at home, by imitating our Modes; and renounce eſſential qualities, to affect an air and manner, which 'tis hardly poſſible for them to attain. Thus that continual alteration in our cloths and houſhold-goods, with which our neighbours reproach us, but always imitate, is without our ſo deſigning it, a wiſe and politick contrivance: for, beſides, thoſe infinite ſums of Money it draws from foreign parts, 'tis an intereſt more ſolid than one would imagine, to have French-men diſperſed in all places, who regulate the garb of other Nations by our own; who begin by enſlaving their eyes, when their heart ſtill oppoſes our Laws; and gain the ſenſes to favour our Empire, when in their opinion they ſtill hold out for Liberty.

So advantageous and happy to us, is this noble and fine fancy of ours, which makes it ſelf be received by our greateſt enemies. However, it ought not to uſurp upon the Arts, nor pretend imperiouſly to paſs ſentence upon the productions of the mind, without conſulting either a good Taſte or Reaſon. When we are arrived to the perfection of any thing, we ought to ſhew our niceneſs by reliſhing, and our juſtice by always eſteeming it: unleſs we obſerve this rule, we may with reaſon be reproached, that Foreigners are more favourable to the merit of our Works, than our ſelves. We ſhall find ſome of our good Pieces preſerve their reputation abroad, when they have loſt it in France: we'll ſee our fopperies elſewhere rejected by good Senſe, when we extol them to the skies, out of a ridiculous folly.

There is a Vice oppoſite to this, which is equally inſupportable; that is, our paſſionate affection for what was done in the former, and our diſlike for every thing that's done in our own time. Upon this foundation HORACE drew the Character of

old

old Age; and an old Man is, indeed, admirably deſcribed by him,

Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti.

In this melancholy ſcene of Life, we impute the defects which proceed purely from our moroſeneſs, to exterior Objects; and when a pleaſant remembrance turns our thoughts from what we are, to what we have been, we attribute Charms to many things, which really had none, becauſe they revive in our minds the idea of our Youth, when every thing pleaſed us by the warmth of our Temper. But we ought not to impute this humour to old Age alone; there are ſome perſons, who imagine that Merit conſiſts in deſpiſing every thing that is new, and Solidity, in valuing every thing that is old. There are ſome, who, of their own nature, are pleaſed with what they ſee, and fond of what they have ſeen. They will tell you wonders of an old Court, where there was nothing but what was ordinary, and endeavour to contemn the Grandeur and Magnificence which they have before their eyes. They are profuſe of their praiſes to deceaſed Perſons of but a common Virtue, and will hardly do juſtice to the Glory of the greateſt Heroe, if he is living. The firſt obſtacle to their eſteem, is to live; as the moſt favourable recommendation, is to have been. After a Man is dead, they will praiſe what they blamed in him, whilſt alive; and then, diſengaged from the moroſeneſs of their humour, they will juſtly render to his memory, what they unjuſtly denied to his perſon.

As for me, 'twas always my opinion, That to make a ſound judgment of Men, and of their Works, it is neceſſary to conſider them by themſelves, and to have a contempt, or a reſpect for things paſt, according to their intrinſick Worth,

whatever it is. I am perſuaded, that we ought not to oppoſe all new things merely out of a ſpirit of Averſion; nor on the other hand, to hunt after them out of love of Novelty; but to reject, or receive them, according to the true opinion we ought to conceive of them. We muſt part with our capricio's, and the fantaſticalneſs of our humour, which, after all, is a hindrance to know things well. The moſt eſſential point is to acquire a true Judgment, and a pure Underſtanding. Nature prepares us for it, but experience and converſation with polite perſons, brings it to perfection.

A

LETTER

TO MR. ***,

Who could not endure that the Earl of ST. ALBANS *ſhould be in love in his old Age.*

WHY ſhould you wonder, that old Men have ſtill an inclination to love? 'Tis not ridiculous for them to ſuffer themſelves to be moved; but 'tis vain in them to pretend that they are able to pleaſe. I muſt own to you, I love the company of pretty Ladies, as much as ever I did; but I admire their Beauty without any deſign, heaven knows,

knows, of making any impreſſion upon their hearts. I only endeavour to pleaſe my ſelf, and ſtudy rather to find tenderneſs in my own breaſt, than in theirs. 'Tis by their charms and not by their favours, that I pretend to be obliged; and if ever I complain of them, 'tis only of their diſagreeableneſs, and not of their rigour.

Let others call you cruel and ſevere,
I'll call you kind for being Fair.
Thanks to your Eyes that far out-ſhine the day.
They warm and animate my clay.

The greateſt pleaſure that old Men have left them, is to live; and nothing ſecures their Life ſo effectually as Love. *I think, therefore I am*, is the concluſion upon which the whole Philoſophy of DESCARTES turns; but 'tis cold and languiſhing for an old Man. *I love, therefore I am*, is a conſequence that has all life and ſpirit in it; it re-calls the deſires of youth, and ſometimes bribes my imagination to believe I am young.

You will tell me, that 'tis a double error, not to believe we are what we are, and to fancy we are what we are not. But what truths can be ſo advantageous as theſe pleaſing errors, that take away from us all thoughts of the Evils we ſuffer; and in return, give us the ſenſe of a Happineſs we don't poſſeſs. But for want of conſidering things with due attention, we pretend that Love is only calculated for the meridian of Youth, tho Reaſon ſhould reſtrain the violence of its inclinations; and we call thoſe old people fools who have the courage to love; tho the wiſeſt thing they can do, is to animate and awaken the lethargy of Nature, by flattering images of Love. What are we the better for Life, if we are not ſenſible that we are alive?

We purely owe our life to our love, if it is able to reanimate it, when the decays of age have made us loſe all ſenſe of it.

At this age all the ſprings of ambition leave us, the deſire of glory no longer fires us, our ſtrength fails us, our courage is extinguiſh'd, or at leaſt weaken'd; Love, Love alone ſupplies the place of every virtue; it averts all thoughts of thoſe evils that ſurround us, and the fear of thoſe that threaten us. It turns aſide the image of death, which otherwiſe wou'd continually preſent it ſelf to our eyes: it diſſipates the terrours of the imagination, and the troubles of the ſoul, and makes us the wiſeſt men in the world, in reſpect of our ſelves, when it makes us paſs for mad-men in the common opinion of others.

A

FUNERAL ORATION.

OF THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.[1]

I Have undertaken to day a thing without precedent; I have undertaken to make the *Funeral Oration* of a perſon, who is in better health than her Orator. This will ſurprize you, Gentlemen; but if we are permitted to take care of our Tombs, to

[1] *See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *under the year* 1684.

to order Inſcriptions for them, and to give a greater extent to our vanity, than nature has been willing to give to our lives: if thoſe that are alive, may appoint the place where they are to lie, when they ſhall be no longer in the number of the living: if CHARLES the Fifth cauſed his own Funerals to be celebrated, and for two years aſſiſted at the Prayers made on that occaſion; can you think it ſtrange, Gentlemen, that a Beauty more illuſtrious by her Charms, than that Emperor was by his Conqueſts, is willing to enjoy the happineſs of her memory, and hear whilſt ſhe is alive, what may be ſaid of her after her death? Let others endeavour to excite your ſorrows for one that is dead, I will command your tears for one that is living; for a perſon who is to die one day, by the neceſſary misfortune of human condition, and who ought to live for ever, for the ſake of her qualities.

Weep, Gentlemen; and not tarrying to bewail a Beauty till ſhe is loſt, afford your tears to the melancholy conſideration that we muſt one day loſe her. Weep, weep. Whoever expects a certain and unavoidable misfortune, may already ſtyle himſelf unfortunate. HORTENSIA will die; that Miracle of the World will one day die; the idea of ſo great a calamity, deſerves your tears.

Yes, charming Goddeſs, you muſt leave us,
Death will remove the heavenly prize;
And of thoſe numerous Charms bereave us,
That now employ our hearts and eyes.

Let us turn our imaginations from her Death to her Birth; that we may ſteal one moment from our grief.

HORTENSIA MANCINI was born at Rome of an illuſtrious family; her Anceſtors were always conſiderable; but tho they had all of them govern'd Empires, as her Uncle [2], neither they nor that maſter of France, had brought her ſo much glory as ſhe reflects back upon them. Heaven form'd this great maſter-piece by a model unknown to the age we live in. To the ſhame of our time, it beſtow'd upon HORTENSIA the beauty of antient Greece, and the virtue of old Rome. Let us paſs over her Infancy; you'll find an Account of it in her *Memoirs* [3]. Her Infancy was attended with a thouſand pretty ſimplicities, but had nothing of importance enough for our ſubject. Gentlemen, I demand your tears, I demand your admiration. To obtain them, I have both Virtues and Misfortunes to repreſent to you.

It was not long before Cardinal MAZARIN was ſenſible of the advantages of his beautiful Niece, and therefore to do juſtice to the gifts of nature, he deſtin'd HORTENSIA to carry his name, and to poſſeſs his wealth after his death. She had charms that might engage even Kings to court her out of love; and a fortune capable to oblige them to do it out of intereſt. Thoſe great inducements happening to be attended with a favourable conjuncture, the King of Great Britain ſought her in marriage [4]: but the Cardinal, who was fitter to govern than to make Sovereigns, loſt an opportunity, which he afterwards endeavoured to find in vain. The Queen, mother to the King of England, negotiated that affair her ſelf; but a reſtored King, remembered the ſmall reſpect that was ſhewn to a baniſhed

[2] *Cardinal Mazarin.*

[3] *See the* Memoirs of the Dutcheſs of Mazarin, *in the third Volume.*

[4] *See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *under the year* 1675.

baniſhed King; and ſo the propoſitions which could not be obtain'd at St. Jean de Luz, were rejected at London.

But why did not you come your ſelf, Madam? For if you had, every thing would have yielded to your charms; and this day you would have made a powerful nation as happy as you ſhould have been your ſelf. However, heaven has in ſome ſort obtain'd its end; for it had ordained you to be the delight of England, which accordingly you are.

This great affair having miſcarried; the next thing to be done, was to enquire into the merits of our Courtiers, to the end you might be match'd with a Husband that was worthy of you. The Cardinal was tempted to make choice of the moſt accompliſhed; but he ſoon overcame the temptation: for, a falſe intereſt prevailing over his mind, he gave you to him who appeared to have the greateſt fortune. Let us therefore lay the firſt fault of this marriage at his Eminency's door: for Monſieur MAZARIN is not to blame for having made his utmoſt efforts in order to obtain the moſt beautiful Lady, and the greateſt Heireſs in Europe.

Madam MAZARIN reckon'd that obedience was her firſt duty, and for that reaſon ſurrender'd her ſelf to the inclination of her Uncle, as well from a principle of gratitude, as of ſubmiſſion. The Cardinal, who ought to have been ſenſible of the natural averſion which heaven had inſpired into their hearts, and of the invincible contrariety that was in the tempers of thoſe two perſons; the Cardinal, I ſay, neither underſtood nor foreſaw any thing of this; or, if he did, preferr'd a little wealth, a ſmall intereſt, and ſome apparent advantage, to the quiet of a Niece whom he was ſo fond of. He is the firſt perſon to be blam'd for theſe ill-match'd knots, thoſe unfortunate chains, thoſe bonds that

were ſo unſutably contriv'd, and ſo juſtly broken. Here all the Cardinal's reputation is blown up at once. He govern'd Cardinal RICHELIEU, who govern'd the Kingdom; but he married his Niece to Monſieur MAZARIN: he loſt his reputation. He govern'd LEWIS XIII. after the death of his great Miniſter, and the Queen Regent, after that of the King her huſband; but he married his Niece to Monſieur MAZARIN: all his reputation is loſt. If any allowance can be made to his Eminency upon this ſcore, we ſhould throw the fault upon the weakneſs of a dying man: for to expect a man ſhould be wiſe and prudent at the point of death, would be to expect too much.

I remember the day after this unhappy Marriage, the Phyſicians aſſured the Mareſchal of Clerembaut, that the Cardinal was better. But the Mareſchal anſwer'd, *He is a dead man: he has married his Niece to Monſieur* MAZARIN; *his brain is diſorder'd, his head is affected; he is a dead man.* Let us pardon this great Cardinal then, upon the account of his illneſs; let us pardon him on the account of the miſery of our ſtate: there's no man alive, who may not ſome time or other ſtand in need of ſuch an apology. Let us weep then, Gentlemen, both out of compaſſion, and out of intereſt; for we have but too much reaſon to ſhed tears.

I find my compaſſion reaches even to Monſieur MAZARIN; he who is the cauſe of the misfortune of others, is really to be pitied himſelf. Do but conſider what a condition he has brought himſelf to, Gentlemen; and then I'm ſure you will be as much diſpos'd to bewail him as I am. Monſieur MAZARIN groans under the load of riches and honours, that have been heap'd upon him; that fortune which in appearance raiſes him, does in reality only depreſs and overwhelm him: grandeur is a puniſhment to him, and wealth is his miſery.

He

He has reaſon to hate a Marriage, which has ingag'd him in the affairs of the world; nor has he leſs reaſon to repent his having obtain'd that which he deſired with ſo much ardour. He might have led a happy life in the Monaſtery of la Trape, or in ſome other holy and retired Society, but for this marriage, which has been ſo fatal to both parties. The intereſts of this world have made him fall a prey to the Devotionaries of the age; thoſe ſpiritual cheats, who make their court with great artifice; who lay ſnares for the good-nature of ſimple and innocent ſouls, thoſe ſouls who, from a ſpirit of holy uſury, ruin themſelves by lending to people who promiſe *Cent per Cent* intereſt in the next world.

But the greateſt evil does not lie in giving, even ſuppoſing one gives very unſeaſonably; but in ſuffering things to be taken away, or to be loſt. A prepoſterous godlineſs makes him cover the nudities of Pictures: a ſcruple of a like nature is the occaſion of maiming and diſfiguring Statues. One day the Pictures are carry'd off; another day the Hangings are taken away: Governments are ſold, Money is ſquander'd away; every thing is waſted, and nothing left to be enjoyed. This, Gentlemen, is the miſerable condition of Monſieur MAZARIN: and ought not he then to have a ſhare in the tears which we ſhed?

But, Madam MAZARIN is to be a thouſand times more lamented: 'tis to her griefs that we owe the largeſt ſhare of our pity. That Husband being ſenſible how unworthy he was of his Wife, debars her the ſight of every body: he drags her from Paris, where ſhe was brought up, in order to carry her from Province to Province, from Town to Town, from one Country place to another; always ſure of a journey, never certain of an abode. He gives her all the diſguſt that affiduity

can

can produce, and all the diſcontent that conſtraint can create: he omits nothing that may render himſelf hateful; tho he might have ſpar'd the pains which Nature had already taken to make him ſo. As they who offend never forgive, ſo Monſieur MAZARIN, the more his wife ſuffer'd, the worſe he uſed her; and by degrees came to be a great tyrant to that perſon, to whom all men of honour and breeding would have choſen to become ſlaves. One would have thought that Madam MAZARIN had no more hardſhips to dread, after what ſhe had ſuffer'd; but this was a miſtake, Gentlemen, for the greateſt of all was yet to come. Madam MAZARIN, who was more jealous of her Reaſon than of her Beauty or her Fortune, finds her ſelf ſubjected to a man who looks upon all the advantages of reaſon and good ſenſe as crimes, and all the viſions of fancy, as the extraordinary graces of Heaven. He is full of Revelations and Prophecies. He admoniſhes and fore-warns, as having a commiſſion from Angels; he commands and threatens, as being authorized by God. There is no farther occaſion for ſeeking the will of Heaven either in *Scripture* or *Tradition*; for that is framed in the imagination, and explain'd by the mouth of Monſieur MAZARIN. You have ſuffer'd your ſelf to be ruin'd by an Extravagant, to be treated as a ſlave by a Tyrant: behold you are at the mercy of a Prophet, HORTENSIA, who is on the ſearch for new inventions to torment you, in the impoſture of hypocrites, and the viſions of fanaticks. The artifices of knaves, and the ſillineſs of fools, every thing combines in order to perſecute you.

Look out, Gentlemen, for the moſt docible, the moſt ſubmiſſive woman in nature, and put her to ſuch-like trials: you'll find ſhe will not bear with her Husband eight days, what Madam MAZARIN

RIN has bore with hers five years. We have reaſon to be aſtoniſh'd that ſhe would not ſeparate from her husband ſooner; we have reaſon to wonder at her patience. If there is any thing to be charged upon her, it is not that ſhe left him, but that ſhe lived with him ſo long as ſhe did. What was your Glory a doing, Madam, in the time of ſo ſhameful a ſlavery? You made your ſelf unworthy of the favours of the Cardinal; you betray'd his pretenſions by a mean compliance, which ſuffer'd that Fortune to go to ruin, which was given to maintain you. You render'd your ſelf unworthy of the favours of Heaven, which had beſtow'd ſo great perfection upon you, by venturing to loſe your Reaſon in the long and contagious commerce you had with Monſieur MAZARIN. Return thanks to God for the good and wiſe reſolution which he put into your heart; your liberty is his work; if he had not inſpired into you his intentions, a natural timidity, a ſcrupulous conduct, a miſtaken ſhame would have ſtill kept you with your Husband, and you ſhould have yet remain'd ſubject to his extravagant Inſpirations. Return thanks to God, Madam, for he has deliver'd you. 'Tis true, this deliverance has coſt you all your Riches, but you have ſtill preſerv'd all your Reaſon: your condition is not unhappy. You are diveſted of every thing that you owed to fortune; but you could never be robb'd of the advantages which nature beſtowed upon you. The greatneſs of your Soul, the ſtrength of your Reaſon, and the charms of your Face, continue with you: your condition is not unhappy. When Monſieur MAZARIN ſuffers the Cardinal's name to be forgotten in France, you enlarge the glory of it among ſtrangers: your condition is not unhappy. There is no nation that does not pay a voluntary homage to the power of your Charms. There is no Queen, who

who hath not a greater ambition for your Beauty, than you can poſſibly have for her Grandeur: your condition is not unhappy.

All climes and countries do adore her,
Freſh triumphs on her Beauties wait,
The world unjuſtly calls her Rover,
She only views the limits of her State.

What Country is there which Madam MAZARIN has not ſeen? what Nation has ſeen her that has not admir'd her? Rome beheld her with as great admiration as Paris did. That City, in all ages of the world ſo glorious, boaſts more of giving her to the world, than producing ſuch a number of Heroes. She believes that ſo extraordinary a Beauty is preferable to the greateſt Valour, and that more conqueſts were to be gained by her eyes, than by the arms of her great men. Italy, Madam, will be everlaſtingly obliged to you for aboliſhing thoſe importunate rules, that bring a greater conſtraint than regularity with them: for freeing her from a ſcience of formalities, ceremonies, and affected civilities; from the tyranny of premeditated reſpects, that render men unſociable, even in ſociety it ſelf. 'Tis Madam MAZARIN who has baniſh'd all Grimace, and all Affectation; who has deſtroy'd that art of an outward behaviour, which only regulates appearances; that ſtudy of exterior things, that only compoſes mens countenances. 'Tis ſhe who has render'd ridiculous a ſtiff aukward gravity, which ſupply'd the place of prudence, and politicks without affairs and without intereſt, buſied only to conceal one's unſerviceableneſs. 'Tis ſhe, who has introduced a ſweet and innocent Liberty; who has rendered Converſation more

more agreeable, and Pleaſures more pure and delicate.

A fatality cauſed her to come to Rome, and a fatality cauſed her to leave it. My Lady, the Conſtable COLONNA, had a mind to leave her Huſband, and imparted this reſolution to her ſiſter. Her ſiſter, as young as ſhe was, repreſented to her, upon this occaſion, all that a mother could have done to hinder it. But ſeeing her unalterably fix'd to execute her deſign, ſhe follow'd her out of love and affection, who could not be diſſuaded by prudence; and ſhared with her all the dangers of flight, the fears, the inquietudes, and the inconveniencies that always attend ſuch reſolutions. Fortune, who has a great power in our enterprizes, but a greater in our adventures, made my Lady, the Conſtable, wander from nation to nation, and threw her at laſt into a Convent at Madrid. Right reaſon adviſed Madam MAZARIN to ſeek her repoſe; and a deſire of Retirement obliged her to ſettle her abode at Chambery. There ſhe found in her ſelf, by her Reflections; in the commerce with the learned Men, by their Converſations; in Books, by reading; and in Nature, by her obſervations; all that ſolid ſatisfaction which a Court does not give to Courtiers, who are either too much taken up with buſineſs, or too much diſſolved in pleaſure. Three whole years did Madam MAZARIN live at Chambery, always in a ſtate of tranquillity, but never obſcure. Whatever inclinations ſhe might have to conceal her ſelf, her merit eſtabliſh'd for her a ſmall Empire in ſpite of her; and, in effect, ſhe reign'd over that City, and over the Nation. Every one acknowledged with pleaſure, that ſuperiority which nature had given her; even he who enjoy'd it over all the reſt by virtue of his birth, forgot it freely, and entered into the ſame ſubjection with his people.

ple. Thoſe of the greateſt merit and quality quitted the Court, and neglected the ſervice of their Prince, to apply themſelves particularly to that of Madam MAZARIN: and conſiderable perſons of remote Countries pretended a voyage to Italy, to furniſh themſelves with an opportunity to ſee her. 'Twas an extraordinary thing to be able to eſtabliſh a Court at Chambery: 'twas, as it were, a prodigy, that a Beauty which had a mind to conceal it ſelf in places almoſt inacceſſible, ſhould make a greater noiſe in Europe, than all the other Ladies together.

The moſt beautiful perſons of every nation had the diſpleaſure to hear continual mention made of an abſent Fair. The moſt lovely Creatures had a ſecret enemy that ruin'd all the impreſſions they could make. It was the idea of Madam MAZARIN, which was preciouſly preſerved after ſhe had been ſeen; and was formed with pleaſure where ſhe had never been.

Such was the conduct of Madam MAZARIN, ſuch was her condition, when the Dutcheſs of York, her relation, paſſed thro' Chambery, as ſhe was coming to the Duke her Huſband. The ſingular merit of the Dutcheſs, her beauty, her wit, and her virtue, inſpir'd Madam MAZARIN with a deſire to accompany her; but her Affairs did not permit her: ſo ſhe was obliged to delay that voyage till a more favourable opportunity. The curioſity to ſee one of the greateſt Courts in the world, which ſhe had never beheld, fortify'd her in this reſolution: and the death of the Duke of Savoy determin'd it [5]. This Prince had the ſame ſentiments of her, as all people that had the happineſs to behold her. He had admir'd her at Turin,

[5] *Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy, died on the* 12th *of June,* 1675.

rin, and this admiration the Dutcheſs of Savoy interpreted to be Love. An impreſſion of jealouſy produced a behaviour very little obliging towards the perſon who had cauſed it. There needed no more than this to oblige Madam MAZARIN to depart out of a Country, where the new Regent was in a manner abſolute. To ſeparate her ſelf from the Dutcheſs of Savoy, and approach the Dutcheſs of York, was but one and the ſame reſolution. HORTENSIA acquainted her friends with this determination, who employed all their arguments to diſſuade her from it, but 'twas in vain. Never was ſeen ſo great an effuſion of tears. As for her own part, ſhe was not inſenſible of the general grief that was occaſioned by the thoughts of her departure; perſons ſo lively affected as they were, did affect her: but this reſolution was taken up, and in ſpite of all their regrets ſhe concludes to depart.

What other courage but that of Madam MAZARIN, would have undertaken ſo long, ſo difficult, and ſo dangerous a Voyage? Before ſhe could accompliſh it, ſhe muſt traverſe ſavage Nations, and Nations that were up in arms; ſhe muſt ſweeten the one, and make her ſelf be reſpected by the other. She underſtood not the Language of any of theſe People, but they underſtood her. Her eyes ſpeak an univerſal Language, which cauſes her to be underſtood by all mankind. What Mountains, what Foreſts, what Rivers had ſhe not to paſs? What did ſhe not ſuffer from the Wind, the Snow, and the Rains? What difficulties of the ways, what rigour of the ſeaſon, what mighty inconveniences had ſhe not to ſtruggle with, which yet did but little injury to her Beauty? Never did HELENA appear ſo charming as HORTENSIA was! but HORTENSIA, that beautiful innocent fugitive, did fly from an unjuſt Huſband, and did

not follow a Lover. With the face of HELENA, Madam MAZARIN had the air, the habit, and the equipage of a Queen of the Amazons! She ſeem'd equally fit to charm, and to fight. One might ſay, ſhe went to give Love to all the Princes whom ſhe was to meet in her paſſage, and to command all the Troops which they commanded. The firſt ſhe had in her power, but it was not her deſign: ſhe made ſome eſſay of the ſecond; for the Troops receiv'd her orders more voluntarily than thoſe of their Generals. After ſhe had travell'd more than three hundred leagues, ſhe arriv'd in Holland, and made no longer a ſtay at Amſterdam, than was neceſſary to view the Rarities of ſo remarkable and famous a City. After ſhe had ſatisfy'd her curioſity, ſhe came to the Brill, where ſhe embarqu'd for England. A ſtorm ſeemed to be wanting in this voyage; and there happened one, which laſted five days. The ſtorm was as furious as it was long; and made the Seamen loſe all their conduct and reſolution, and the Paſſengers all their hopes. Madam MAZARIN alone was exempt from lamentation; leſs importunate with Heaven to preſerve her, than ſubmitting and reſigning her ſelf to its will. But it had been decreed ſhe ſhould viſit England. She landed there, and in a ſhort time came ſafe to London [6]. All people had a great curioſity to ſee her: but the Ladies had the greateſt alarm at her arrival. The Engliſh, who were in poſſeſſion of the Empire of Beauty, ſaw it loſt, not without great regret, to a ſtranger; and 'tis natural to be ſenſibly concerned for the loſs of the ſweeteſt of all vanities. So conſiderable an intereſt, was the only thing in the world that could unite them. Old enemies

[6] *Madam Mazarin came into England in the Month of December*, 1675.

enemies were then reconciled; thoſe that were indifferent, now began to viſit one another, and friends link'd themſelves more ſtrictly together than before. Theſe confederates very well foreſaw their misfortune; but being willing to delay it, they prepared to defend an intereſt, which was dearer to them than their lives. Madam MAZARIN had nothing to defend her ſelf but her Charms and her Virtues: this was enough to make her apprehenſive of nothing. After ſhe had kept her chamber for ſome time, leſs to recover the fatigues of her Journey, than to prepare her Equipage, ſhe appear'd at Whitehall.

Fair Beauties of Whitehall give way,
HORTENSIA *does her Charms diſplay.*
She comes, ſhe comes! reſign the day,
She muſt reign, and you obey.

From that day they never diſputed the Prize with her in publick: but they carried on a ſecret war againſt her within doors; where all ended either in private injuries, which never arrived to her knowledge; or in vain murmurs which ſhe deſpiſed. The World now beheld an extraordinary turn. Thoſe that were the moſt violently tranſported againſt her, were the firſt that imitated her. They would dreſs themſelves like her: but this was neither her Dreſs nor Habit. For her Perſon gave a new grace to every thing ſhe wore, and thoſe that endeavour'd to imitate her air and dreſs, wanted the principal thing, her perſon. One might ſay of her, what was ſaid, with leſs reaſon, of the late Dutcheſs of Orleans; *all the world imitates her, and no one reſembles her.*

As for the Men, ſhe made all that pretended to nicety and judgment, her ſubjects, that beheld her. They are only men of a bad taſte, and worſe wit, that can defend the remainder of their Liberty againſt her. Happy in the conqueſt ſhe makes! more happy in thoſe ſhe doth not make! Madam MAZARIN no ſooner arrives to any place, but ſhe eſtabliſhes a Houſe there, which cauſes the reſt to be abandoned: the greateſt freedom in the world is to be ſeen there, and an equal diſcretion: every one is more commodiouſly uſed there than at home; and more reſpectfully than at Court. 'Tis true, there are frequent Diſputes there, but then it is with more knowledge than heat: 'tis not done out of a ſpirit of contradiction, but fully to diſcover the matters in agitation: rather to animate Converſation than to inflame it.

The Play there is very inconſiderable; 'tis the diverſion only that makes the play. You can neither diſcover in their faces the fear of loſing, nor a concern for what is loſt. Some of them are ſo far diſintereſted, that they are reproach'd for rejoicing at their own loſing, and afflicting themſelves when they are winning. Play is follow'd by the beſt Repaſts in the world. One may there ſee every thing that comes from France for the delicate; and all that comes from the Indies for the curious; even the common meats become rare by the exquiſite reliſh which is beſtowed upon them. 'Tis not ſuch a plenty as may make us fear a diſſipation; 'tis not a frugality that ſhews either avarice or penury. The management of her houſe is not ſo niggard and ſullen, as to content it ſelf merely with ſatisfying the neceſſities of life, and afford nothing to the pleaſures of it. She loves a good order that furniſhes every thing that can be deſired, and that wiſely manages the uſe of it; ſo that nothing may be wanting. There is certainly nothing

ſo

ſo well regulated as this family: but Madam MAZARIN diffuſes thro'out the whole, I do not know what ſort of an eaſy air; ſomething free and natural that conceals the regulation of it. One would conclude that things moved of themſelves, ſo ſecret is the ordering of them, and ſo difficult to be perceived.

Let Madam MAZARIN change her lodgings, and the difference of places is inſenſible: wherever ſhe goes, we ſee nothing but her; and if we ſee her we ſee every thing. They never come ſoon enough, and never depart late enough: they go to bed with regret to have left her, and they riſe with deſire to behold her afreſh.

But how great is the uncertainty of our human condition! at the time, when ſhe innocently enjoy'd all the pleaſures which inclination deſires, and reaſon does not prohibit; that ſhe had the ſatisfaction to ſee her ſelf beloved and eſteemed by all the world; that thoſe Ladies who had oppoſed themſelves to her at firſt, were charmed by her converſation; that ſhe had, as it were, extinguiſhed ſelf-love in the ſoul of her friends, every one expreſſing the ſame kind ſentiments for her, which it is natural to have for one's ſelf: at the time, when the vaineſt, and the greateſt admirers of themſelves forbore to contend with her beauty; that envy had concealed it ſelf in the bottom of their hearts; that all repining againſt her was private, or appeared ridiculous as ſoon as it began to be perceived: at this happy time, an extraordinary indiſpoſition ſeizes her, in ſpite of all her Charms, in ſpite of all our Admiration, and Love. You were juſt a periſhing, HORTENSIA, and ſo were we: you, by the violence of your pain; we, by that of our concern for you. But it was more than being ſimply afflicted: we felt all that you did, and were ſick as you were. Your unequal moments ſometimes car-

ried you to the brink of death; and ſometimes recalled you to life: we were ſubject to all the accidents of your ſickneſs; and to know how it fared with you, it was not at all neceſſary to enquire after your health; they needed only obſerve in what ſtate we found our ſelves.

Praiſed be that univerſal diſpenſer of good and evil; praiſed be Heaven that has reſtored you to our vows, and given us again to our ſelves. Behold, you are living, and ſo are we; but we have not as yet recover'd the cruel fright that this danger gave us: a melancholy idea ſtill remains behind, which makes us more lively conceive what muſt one day happen. Nature will deſtroy this beauteous fabrick, which it has taken ſo much pains to frame. Nothing can exempt it from that lamentable Law to which we are all ſubject. She who ſo viſibly diſtinguiſhes her ſelf from others, during her Life, will be confounded with the meaneſt at her Death. And wilt thou then complain, thou who haſt only an ordinary Genius, a common Merit, or an indifferent Beauty? doſt thou complain that thou muſt die? Don't murmur, unjuſt as ye are; HORTENSIA will die like you. A time will come (Oh that this unfortunate time would never come!) when they will ſay of this miracle,

She's now reſolv'd to common clay,
She that did Beauty's Empire ſway.
Fate, cruel Fate, would have it ſo,
Fate, that governs all below.
Now, vulgar ſouls, learn to reſign your breath,
And, without murmuring, ſubmit to Death [7].

A

[7] *An imitation of a* Sonnet *of Malherbe, on the Death of the Duke of Orleans.*

A

LETTER

TO THE

COUNT DE GRAMMONT.

I AM inform'd by the Mareſchal DE CREQUY, that you are become one of the richeſt Noblemen at Court [1]. If Riches, which uſe to ſoften the courage, and lay induſtry aſleep, have done no injury to the good qualities of my Hero, I rejoice with all my heart at the alteration of your fortune: but if they have ruin'd the Virtues of the *Chevalier*, and the Merit of the *Count*, I repent for not having executed the deſign I have had ſo often of killing you, to ſecure the honour of your memory. What a vexation will it be to me, to ſee you renounce Play, and abandon the Ladies! To ſee you heap up filthy Mammon for the marriage of your Daughter, to deſire dirty acres, and talk of Lands and Tenements as neceſſary things for the eſtabliſhment of a family! What a ſtrange alteration will it be in you to make ſuch a buſtle for land, vile paltry land, after you have ſo often deſpiſed it as unworthy of you, and abandon'd it to the Rooks, the Crows, and the Magpies! What a ſtrange al-

 teration,

[1] *The Eſtate of the Count de Toulongeon, his elder Brother, who dyed in 1679, had fallen to him.*

teration, if nothing will ſerve your turn but to be made my *Lord Baron of St. Meat*, to have the Nobility of Bigorre every morning at your levee, and to entertain your neighbours with that pretty winning way which gains all the hearts of Gaſcony.

So much admir'd, and follow'd by ſo few,
Will you your former Glories then undo?

What will become of all thoſe advantages which I gave you, in preference even to SOLOMON?

That mighty Prince, who knew the hidden power
Of every verdant plant, and ſmiling flower;
While he had vigour left, ſhot pleaſure flying,
And ſhow'd his heavenly wiſdom by enjoying.

A very fine commendation truly, my Lord, for you to be effaced out of the memory of your old friends; while all the ſatisfaction you can expect, will be to hear your truſty Gaſcons and the good people of Bearn cry, *My Lord the Count keeps a moſt noble houſe; they eat all in the plate of Monſieur* DE TOULONGEON; *every thing is manag'd in excellent order: if things go on at this rate, Mademoiſelle* DE GRAMMONT *will be one of the greateſt fortunes at Court.* Let not, my Lord, any wicked diſcourſes of this nature tempt you. He that has promis'd to take care of the Larks, will take care of your Children. You have nothing to do, but conſult your reputation and pleaſure.

Be rich, my Lord, and let both Indies meet
To lay their brighteſt treaſures at your feet.
Be rich; but why ſhould wealth alone employ
Your precious hours, and rob your ſoul of joy?

Take

Take my advice, Love's better game purſue,
And Love will find you ſomething ſtill to do.
Still you have charms enough to pleaſe the fair,
Vigour to win, and rhet'rick to enſnare.
Nay, from the root tho all the ſap were gone,
Be govern'd by your friend, and ſtill love on.

King SOLOMON, *almoſt as wiſe as you,*
With conſtant homage to Love's Altars flew.
His vows were anſwer'd, and his ſetting ſun
Shin'd with a fiercer luſtre than his noon.

WALLER, *in whom no ſigns of age appear,*
Who rivals all our youth in wit and air;
Derives new life from CELIA, *while he ſips*
Eternal youth on her ambroſial lips.
Dull ſots may call it weakneſs, if they pleaſe;
But is't a weakneſs to conſult one's eaſe?
Love all defects with generous care ſupplies,
And Beauty gives what envious Age denies.

Me too, who hourly with time's malice ſtrive,
The fair, the kind HORTENSIA *keeps alive,*
Her heavenly rays the drooping plant revive.
No ſullen damps of heavineſs and care,
No black reflections, fraught with wild deſpair,
Approach my breaſt while my HORTENSIA'S *there.*
Her charming looks, while they vouchſafe a ſmile,
Into life's glimmering lamp pour vital oil;
Her ſovereign glances ſilently impart
Joy to my ſoul, and tranſports to my heart.
Devouring Time whets his ſharp teeth in vain,
While ſhe the tottering fabrick does ſuſtain.

Thus

Thus I, preſerv'd by a reflecting fire,
Live by the warmth HORTENSIA'S *rays inſpire.*
Youth from her eyes ſhoots down into my blood,
And with its beams unthaws the icy flood.
Like clock-work, by her winding up, I move,
And owe my motions to almighty Love.

Blame me not then, if I ſuch helps employ
To ſooth my pains, and flatter me with joy.
In vain, alas! from Books we ſeek relief,
Books, that can ſcarce oppoſe a common grief.
In vain Philoſophers our ills engage:
Love is the beſt Elixir for old-age.

I wou'd wiſh you the age of a Patriarch, did not I know that extraordinary perſons like you, have a greater regard for their glory than length of life.

To the laſt ſcene your glorious courſe maintain,
The Womens joy, and envy of the Men.
In you let all united talents ſhine,
The Courtier, Hero, and the Stateſman join.
Your blooming youth did the great RICHELIEU *pleaſe,*
You knew his haughty ſtubborn heart to ſeize.
Thro' groves of Pikes, thro' Sieges and Alarms,
Your manly vigour follow'd CONDE'S *arms.*
Happy, thrice happy now, near LEWIS *plac'd,*
You flouriſh, with your Prince's favours bleſt.
While Europe trembling at his awful nod,
With ſecret horror does confeſs the God.
But I muſt this inſpiring theme give o'er,
And what I can't deſcribe, muſt ſilently adore.

A

LETTER

To young DERY[1].

My Dear Boy,

I Don't wonder at your having an invincible averſion hitherto againſt a thing, which of all others, concerns you the moſt nearly. You have been adviſed by ruſtical and clowniſh people, to get your ſelf *gelt:* an expreſſion ſo baſe and odious, that it would have ſhock'd a far leſs delicate mind, than yours. As for my own part, my dear Boy; I ſhall endeavour to promote your advantage, in a more agreeable way; and I will tell you with all the terms of inſinuation, that you muſt be ſweetned by a gentle Operation, which will ſecure to you the fineneſs of your complexion a long time, and preſerve the tunefulneſs of your voice all your life.

Thoſe Guineas, thoſe red Cloathes, thoſe little Horſes which you get, are not given to Mr. DERY's ſon for his noble birth; 'tis your face and your voice, that procure you them. In three or four years, alas! you will loſe the charms of both, if you have not the wit to prevent that loſs; and the ſource of all thoſe allurements will be dried up.

[1] *The Dutcheſs of Mazarin's Page, who ſung well.*

up. Now you talk familiarly with Kings, you are careſſed by Dutcheſſes, and praiſed by all the perſons of quality; but when the charms of your Voice are gone, you will only be a fit companion for POMPEY [2], and perhaps be deſpiſed by Mr. STOURTON [3].

But you are afraid, you ſay, that you will be leſs in the Ladies favour. Lay aſide all ſuch apprehenſions; the Age in which we live, is not an age of ſimpletons; the merit which follows the operation is well known; and for one Miſtreſs that Mr. DERY, as he was made by nature, might have had, Mr. DERY ſoftned by art, ſhall have a hundred. You are ſure then of having Miſtreſſes enow, which is a great happineſs; you will have no Wife, which is being free of a great evil: happy in having no Wife, happier in being without children. Mr. DERY's Daughter would be got with child, his Son would be hanged; and what is yet more certain, his Wife would make him a Cuckold. Secure your ſelf againſt thoſe misfortunes, by a ſpeedy Operation: thus you will be devoted purely to your ſelf; proud of ſo ſmall a merit, which will make your fortune, and procure you the friendſhip of all the World. If I live long enough to ſee you when your voice becomes rough, and your beard grows, you will be much blamed by every body. I deſire you to prevent this, and believe me to be your moſt ſincere friend.

REFLEC-

[2] *The Dutcheſs of Mazarin's Negro.*
[3] *The Dutcheſs of Mazarin's Page.*

REFLECTIONS UPON RELIGION.

IF we only conſider the repoſe of this life, 'twere well if Religion had more or leſs influence upon mankind. It conſtrains, but doth not ſubject enough; like ſome Governments, that take away the ſweetneſs of liberty, and yet don't carry with them the advantages of ſubjection. The will makes us aſpire but weakly after thoſe good things that are promiſed, becauſe it is not excited enough by the underſtanding, which is not enough convinced. We ſay, out of compliance, that *we believe* whatever authority enjoins us to believe: but without a particular grace, we are rather perplext than perſwaded of a thing that doth not fall under the evidence of our ſenſes, and which affords no manner of demonſtration to our minds.

This, in ſhort, is the effect of Religion, with reſpect to ordinary men; let us now ſee the advantages of it in the truly and perfectly religious Man. The truly devout perſon breaks off with nature, if we may be allowed ſo to ſpeak, to take pleaſure in abſtaining from pleaſures; and while he ſubjects the body to the mind, he makes in ſome meaſure, even mortification and pain delightful to himſelf. Philoſophy goes no farther, than to teach us to endure misfortunes: the Chriſtian Religion makes us enjoy them as bleſſings; and we may

ſay ſeriouſly of it, what has been gallantly ſaid of Love,

All other pleaſures are not worth its pains [1].

A true Chriſtian knows how to make his advantage of every thing. The evils which he ſuffers, are the good things which God ſends him: the good things which he wants, are evils, from which Providence has ſecured him. Every thing is a benefit to him, every thing in this world is a mercy; and when, by the neceſſity of his mortal condition, he muſt die, he looks upon the end of Life, as a paſſage to one more happy, which is to laſt for ever.

Such is the felicity of a true Chriſtian, whilſt uncertainty makes the condition of all others unhappy. To ſay the truth, moſt of us are unreſolved; and not fully determined either to good or evil. We find in our ſelves a continual turn and return from Nature to Religion, and from Religion to Nature. If we abandon the care of our Salvation to ſatisfy our Inclinations, thoſe very inclinations ſoon riſe up againſt our pleaſures; and a diſguſt for thoſe objects, which flatter'd us moſt of all, makes us return to the care of our ſalvation. If on the other hand, we renounce our Pleaſures out of a principle of conſcience, the ſame thing happens to us in our ſearch after ſalvation; for either habitude or tediouſneſs makes us return to the objects of our firſt inclinations.

I have ſhown how it ſucceeds with us, as to Religion within our ſelves: let us now obſerve what judgment the Publick makes of it. If we forſake God for the World, we are looked upon as impious perſons. If we forſake the World for God, we are thought to be weak, and decayed in our underſtanding;

[1] *M. de Charleval.*

derſtanding; and we are as little pardoned for ſacrificing fortune to Religion, as Religion to fortune. The ſingle example of the Cardinal de RETS [a], will ſuffice to juſtify my aſſertion. When he was made Cardinal by intrigues, factions, and tumults, the world exclaimed againſt him as an ambitious man, who ſacrificed, not only the publick, but his conſcience, and religion, to his fortune (as they ſaid): when he left the cares of earth for thoſe of Heaven; when the perſuaſion of another Life made him conſider the grandeur of this as a Chimera, then they ſaid his head was turned, and made that to paſs for a ſcandalous weakneſs in him, which is propoſed to us in Chriſtianity, as the greateſt Virtue.

Men of mean qualities, ſhow but little favour to great Virtues; a lofty Wiſdom offends an ordinary Reaſon. Mine, as ordinary as it is, admires a perſon who is thorowly perſuaded, and would admire him ſtill more, could I find him inſenſible to all the temptations of fortune. I ſomewhat queſtion the ſincerity of thoſe Preachers, who offer us the Kingdom of Heaven in publick, and yet ſollicit a ſmall Benefice in private, with all the vigour and application imaginable.

The ſole idea of eternal happineſs renders the poſſeſſion of every thing elſe contemptible to a man of true belief: but becauſe few of us have Faith, few of us are able to defend this idea againſt real objects; the hope of what is promiſed to us, naturally yielding to the enjoyment of what is before us. With the greateſt part of Chriſtians, the deſire of believing ſerves inſtead of belief: the Will gives them a ſort of Faith by its deſires, which the Underſtanding

[a] *John-Francis-Paul de Gondi, Cardinal de Rets, and Archbiſhop of Paris. He died in the year 1679. His* Memoirs *have been lately publiſh'd in French, and tranſlated into Engliſh.*

derſtanding with all its light refuſes. I have known ſome devout men, that in a ſtrange ſort of a contrariety between their affection and their reaſon, loved God truly without having any great belief in him. When they abandoned themſelves to the affection of their heart, there was nothing but zeal for Religion; 'twas all fervency and love: when they examined their reaſon, they were amazed to ſee that they could not comprehend what they lov'd; and were at a loſs how to anſwer themſelves upon the Subject of their Love. Then, to deliver my ſelf in ſpiritual terms, *they wanted Conſolations*; and fell into that ſad ſtate of Devotion, which is called *Aridity* and *Dryneſs* in the language of the Monaſteries.

God alone is able to give us a ſteddy, firm and real Faith. All that we can do of our ſelves, is to humble our underſtanding in oppoſition to the light of nature, and to execute with ſubmiſſion what is preſcribed to us. Humanity eaſily mingles its errors in matters of Faith; but it ſeldom miſtakes in the practice of Virtues: for it is leſs in our power to think juſtly of the things of heaven, than to do well. A man can never be miſtaken in actions of Juſtice and Charity. Sometimes Heaven ordains, and Nature makes an oppoſition: ſometimes Nature demands what Reaſon forbids. But in matters of Charity all debates are ſilenced, and there is, as it were, a general agreement between Heaven, Nature and Reaſon.

That

That DEVOTION *is our laſt* LOVE.

DEvotion is our laſt Love, in which the Soul, that thinks it aſpires only after the felicity of another Life, endeavours, without thinking of it, to procure ſome new comfort in this. The habit of ſinning is an old paſſion or inclination, which now affords nothing but diſguſts; from whence it commonly falls out, that we turn to God out of a fondneſs for change, in order to form in our ſoul new deſires, and raiſe in it the motions of a growing paſſion. Devotion will ſometimes reſtore to an old Woman that delicacy of ſentiment, and that tenderneſs of heart, which the moſt youthful could not find in marriage, or in an old intrigue. A new Devotion is every way pleaſing; nay, we are even pleaſed with talking of the old ſins which we repent of; for there is a ſecret ſatisfaction in deteſting that which has been offenſive, and in calling to mind what was formerly agreeable in them.

If we carefully examine a converted Debauchee, we will often find that he left off ſinning only out of wearineſs and vexation for his paſt life. In effect, whom do we ſee quitting his vice at the time that it ſooths his imagination, at the time when it appears with its allurements, and gives a taſte for pleaſures? We leave it off, when its charms are worn out, and a tireſome habit has ſunk us inſenſibly into languiſhment. It is not therefore that which pleas'd us that we quit, when we change our

courſe of life; but 'tis that which we could not bear any longer: and then, the ſacrifice which we offer up to God, is that of diſguſts, which we endeavour to get rid of at any rate.

There are two very different impreſſions of vice upon us. That which is irkſome and languiſhing in the end, makes us deteſt the offence againſt God; that which in its beginning was delightful, makes us regret the pleaſure without perceiving it; and this is the reaſon why there are but few converſions wherein is not felt a ſecret mixture of the pleaſure of remembrance, and the ſorrow of repentance. 'Tis true, we weep for an odious crime, with full bitterneſs; but our repentance for the vices, which were dear to us, always leaves ſome ſmall tenderneſs for them, which is mingled with our tears. There is ſomething of the amorous kind in our repenting of an amorous paſſion; and this paſſion is ſo natural in us, that we never repent having loved, without love. In effect, if a converted ſoul remembers its having ſighed for Love; it either comes to love God, and thereof makes to it ſelf a new ſubject of ſighs and pantings; or it fixes its remembrance very agreeably upon the object of its paſt pleaſures. The fear of Damnation, the image of Hell with all its fires, will never be able to remove out of that mind the idea of a lover; for it is not in the power of fear, but of love only, thorowly to efface love. I will ſay more: a perſon ſeriouſly touch'd, has no thoughts of ſaving himſelf, but of loving, when he unites himſelf to God. Salvation, which was the firſt of his cares, is ſwallow'd up in Love, which ſuffers no other cares in his mind, nor no other deſires in his Soul, but purely its own. If in this ſtate we have our thoughts fixed on eternity, this is not in order to apprehend the evils with which we are threatned, or hope for the

the glory that is promiſed us; but 'tis ſolely in order to love eternally, that we are pleaſed with contemplating an eternal duration. Where Love has once got the upper hand, there is no other paſſion that can ſubſiſt of it ſelf: 'tis by it that we both hope and fear; 'tis by it that both our joys and our griefs are formed; ſuſpicion, jealouſy, and even hatred do inſenſibly take their riſe from it; and all thoſe paſſions, which before were diſtinct and particular, are now only its movements, if we take the thing right. I hate an old Libertine as a wicked wretch, and deſpiſe him as a ſenſeleſs creature, who underſtands not wherein his happineſs conſiſts. So long as he ſets up to give every thing to Nature, he reſiſts his laſt propenſion towards God, and denies Nature the only comfort which it requires of him. He abandon'd himſelf to its motions, ſo long as they were vicious; he oppoſes its pleaſure ſo ſoon as it becomes a Virtue. *All the Virtues*, ſay they, *are loſt in Heaven, except Charity*, that is to ſay, *Love*. So that God, who preſerves it in us after death, would never have us to diveſt our ſelves of it as long as we live.

A

LETTER

TO A LADY

Who deſign'd to turn Devout.

I Am inform'd, Madam, that you deſign to turn Devout, and I heartily return God thanks for having more occaſion, in our converſations, for it; the purity of thoſe thoughts you are going to entertain, than for thoſe that might be ſuggeſted to you by the Commerce of the World. I therefore conjure you, as one who is concern'd with Heaven, to take up a true Devotion; and in order to render your Converſion ſuch as I would have it, it will not be improper to deſcribe to you that of our Ladies, ſuch as it is, that you may avoid the faults that attend it.

Their ordinary Repentance, as far as I have obſerv'd, is not ſo much a ſorrow for their ſins, as a regret for their pleaſures: wherein they are themſelves deceiv'd, amorouſly lamenting what they have loſt, while they believe that they devoutly bewail what they have done.

Thoſe decay'd beauties that give up themſelves to God, fancy that they have extinguiſh'd old flames, which, however, ſecretly endeavour to kindle a-freſh; and their Love having only chang'd its object,

object, they preſerve for their laſt ſufferings, the ſame ſighs, and the ſame tears, which expreſs'd their old torments. They have loſt nothing of the firſt troubles of an amorous heart, ſuch as fears, ſwoonings, and raptures: they retain its moſt endearing motions; tender deſires, ſoft ſorrows, and precious languiſhments. When they were young, they ſacrific'd Lovers: now they have none, they ſacrifice themſelves; and the new Convert offers up to God the old Voluptuary.

I have known thoſe whoſe Converſion was, in ſome meaſure, owing to the pleaſure of change: others, who devoting themſelves to God, felt a malicious joy from their fancied infidelity to the Men.

There are thoſe who renounce the World, out of a ſpirit of revenge againſt the World who has left them: others again, who mix their natural vanity with ſuch a renunciation; and the ſame Pride that made them leave the Courtiers for the Prince, ſecretly flatters them that they can deſpiſe the Prince for God.

To ſome of them, God is a new Lover, that comforts them for him they have loſt: in others, Devotion is a proſpect of private intereſt, and the myſterious cloak of a new conduct.

There are ſome melancholy and reſerv'd, who reliſh beſt an obſcure pleaſure, and prefer an awkward pretender to ſanctity, before a handſome genteel lover: ſometimes they deſign to raiſe themſelves up to Heaven in good earneſt; and their weakneſs makes them reſt by the way, with the Directors who conduct them. Devotion has ſome tenderneſs for God, which may eaſily return to a paſſion for Men.

I forgot to mention ſome women in retirement, who, in appearance, give up themſelves to God, that they may, in ſome meaſure, ſhake off their

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[illegible] Devout women,
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[illegible] Devout women
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Not

Not but that there may be a holy and happy agreement between his will and yours. You may love what he loves; you may desire what he desires: but thro' a pleasing and secret impulse, we generally do what we desire our selves; and this ought to render us more cautious and attentive, that we may always act consonantly, and with regard to his will.

But in order to that, you need not, Madam, subject your self to the conduct of those Directors, who lead you into certain niceties of spirituality and devotion, which neither you, nor, for the most part, they themselves, understand. The will of God is not so abstruse, but that it easily discovers it self to those who design to follow it: so that, on most occasions, you shall have more need of submission than knowledge. Those precepts that have any relation to our desires, are clearly understood, and agreeably follow'd; those that thwart our inclinations, are likewise plain enough: but nature strives against them, and the untractable soul rejects their impression.

I discourse with you more seriously then at first I intended; and to conclude still more profitably, I would require two things of you, in the new course of Devotion you are going to enter upon. The first, that you take care, not to offer up your love to God, as an unprofitable passion, which you design to keep in ure: the second, that you never dissemble your animosities, under the appearance of zeal; and never persecute those you hate, under a false shew of piety.

OF THE POEMS OF THE ANTIENTS.

NO man pays a greater veneration to the Works of the Antients than my ſelf. I admire the Deſign, the Œconomy, the elevation of Spirit, the extent of Knowledge which are ſo viſible in their Compoſitions: but the difference of Religion, Government, Cuſtoms, and Manners, have introduced ſo great a change in the world, that we muſt go, as it were, upon a new Syſtem, to ſuit with the inclination and genius of the preſent age.

And certainly my opinion muſt be accounted reaſonable, by all thoſe who will examine it. For if we give quite oppoſite characters, when we ſpeak of the God of the Iſraelites, and of the God of the Chriſtians; tho it be the ſame Deity: if we ſpeak otherwiſe of the Lord of Hoſts, of that terrible God, who commanded to deſtroy the enemy to the very laſt man; than we do of that God patient, meek, merciful, who enjoins to love them: if the Creation of the world is deſcrib'd with one genius, and the Redemption of men with another: if we want one kind of eloquence to ſet forth the

great-

greatneſs of the Father, who hath made all things; and another kind to expreſs the love of the Son, who was pleaſed to ſuffer all: why ſhould there not be a new Art, a new Genius to paſs from the falſe Gods to the true one; from JUPITER, CYBELE, MERCURY, MARS, APOLLO, to *JESUS CHRIST*, the Virgin MARY, our Angels, and our Saints?

Take away the Gods from the Antients, and you take from them all their Poems: the conſtitution of the Fable is in diſorder; and the deſign of it turned upſide down. Without the Prayer of THETIS to JUPITER, and the Dream which JUPITER ſends to AGAMEMNON, there will be no *Ilias*; without MINERVA, no *Odyſſea*; without the protection of JUPITER, and the aſſiſtance of VENUS, no *Æneis*. The Gods aſſembled in heaven, and there debated what was to be done upon earth: they formed reſolutions, and were no leſs neceſſary to execute than to take them. Theſe immortal Leaders of parties among men, contrived all, gave life to all; inſpired force and courage; engaged themſelves in fight; and, if we except AJAX, who aſked nothing of them but light, there was no conſiderable warrior that had not his God upon his chariot, as well as his Squire; the God to conduct his ſpear; the Squire to direct his horſes. Men were pure machines, whom ſecret ſprings put in motion; and thoſe ſprings were nothing elſe but the inſpiration of their Gods and Goddeſſes.

The Divinity we ſerve is more favourable to the liberty of men. We are in his hands, like the reſt of the univerſe, by way of dependance; but in our own to deliberate and to act. I confeſs we ought always to beg his protection. LUCRETIUS himſelf aſks it, and in that very Book, where he attacks Providence with all the force of his wit, he falls

falls a praying, and implores that power which governs us, to be ſo gracious as to avert all misfortunes from him,

Quod procul à nobis flectat natura gubernans[1].

However, we ſhould not introduce this formidable Majeſty upon every trifling occaſion, whoſe very name ought never to be uſed in vain. If the falſe Divinities are mixed in fictions, 'tis no great matter; thoſe are downright Fables, and vain effects of the Poet's imagination. As for Chriſtians, they ought to give nothing but truth to him, who is truth it ſelf; and they ſhould adapt all their diſcourſes to his wiſdom, and to his goodneſs.

This great change is follow'd by that of Manners, which by reaſon of their being civilized, and ſoften'd at preſent, can't ſuffer that wild and unbecoming freedom that was aſſumed in former times. 'Tis this change that makes us nauſeate the vile and brutal ſcolding between ACHILLES and AGAMEMNON. Upon this ſcore AGAMEMNON appears odious to us, when we ſee him take away that Trojan's life, whom MENELAUS, upon whoſe account the war was made, had generouſly pardon'd. AGAMEMNON the *King of Kings*[2], who ought to have ſhown an example of virtue to all the Princes, and the People; the baſe AGAMEMNON kills this miſerable wretch with his own hand. 'Tis on the ſame account that ACHILLES fills us with horror, when he butchers young LYCAON, who intreated him ſo tenderly for his life. 'Tis then we hate him even to his Virtues, when he ties the body of HECTOR to his chariot, and drags

[1] Lucret. *Lib.* I. *See M. Bayle's* Dictionary *in the Article of* Lucretius.

[2] *So Homer calls him.*

drags him inhumanly to the Camp of the Greeks. I loved him as a valiant man, and as the friend of PATROCLUS: the cruelty of this action makes me abhor his valour, and his friendſhip. 'Tis quite otherwiſe with HECTOR: his good qualities return into our minds: we pity and lament him the more for his ſufferings; his idea on the ſudden becomes very dear, and raiſes all our thoughts in his favour.

Let it not be ſaid in the behalf of ACHILLES, that HECTOR had kill'd his dear PATROCLUS. The reſentment of his death doth not excuſe him to us. An affliction that could permit him to ſuſpend his revenge, and to tarry till his arms were made before he went to the combat; an affliction ſo patient ought not to have carried him to this unuſual barbarity, after the fight was over. But let us acquit Friendſhip of an imputation ſo odious. The ſweeteſt, the tendereſt of all Virtues, does not uſe to produce effects ſo contrary to its Nature. ACHILLES had really this cruelty in the bottom of his Nature. It is not to the friend of PATROCLUS, but to the inhumane and inexorable ACHILLES, that it belongs.

This all the world will eaſily agree to. However, the vices of the Hero are no faults in the Poet. HOMER's deſign was to paint Nature ſuch as he ſaw it, and not to improve it in his Heroes. He has deſcribed them with more paſſions, than virtues: now Paſſion has its foundation in Nature, and Virtue is a thing acquired by the improvement of our Reaſon.

Politicks had not yet united men, by the bonds of a rational Society; nor poliſhed them enough for others: Morality had not yet accompliſhed them for themſelves. Good qualities were not ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed from the bad. ULYSSES was prudent, and fearful; provident againſt dangers; induſtrious

duſtrious to get out of them; valiant ſometimes, when there was leſs danger to be ſo, than otherwiſe. ACHILLES was valiant and fierce; and (what HORACE would not ſet down in his Character of him) condeſcending ſometimes to puerile follies. As his Nature was uncertain, and irregular; hence it came to paſs that his behaviour was ſometimes fierce, and ſometimes childiſh. One while he drags the body of HECTOR in a barbarous manner; now he whines to the Goddeſs his Mother, like a child, to drive away the flies from that of PATROCLUS, his dear friend.

Their Cuſtoms differ no leſs from ours, than their morals. Two Heroes ready for the combat would not amuſe themſelves now a-days in ſetting forth their Genealogy: but it is eaſy to obſerve in the *Ilias*, nay in the *Odyſſea*, and the *Æneis* too, that ſuch a method was then practiſed. Men harangued before they fought, juſt as they make ſpeeches in England, before they are hanged.

As for Compariſons, diſcretion will teach us to uſe them more ſparingly than the Antients: good ſenſe, will render them juſt; invention, new. The *Sun*, the *Moon*, the *Stars*, the *Elements*, will lend us no more a worn-out magnificence. *Wolves*, *Shepherds*, and *Flocks*, will not afford us a ſimplicity too much known and threadbare.

I am of opinion, there is an infinite number of Compariſons, that are more like one another than the things they are compared to. A Goſ-hawk, that ſtrikes a Pidgeon; a Spar-hawk that dares the little Birds; a Falcon that makes a ſtoop; are liker one another in the ſwiftneſs of their flight, than the men to whom they are compared for their Impetuoſity. Take away the diſtinction of the names of *Goſ-hawk*, *Spar-hawk* and *Falcon*, you'll find the very ſame thing. The violence of a *Whirl-wind*, that roots up Trees, more reſembles that of a *Storm*, which

which raiſes diſorders of another kind, than the objects to which it is compared. A *Lion*, whom hunger drives from his den; a *Lion* purſued by hunters; a *Lioneſs* furious and jealous of her whelps; a *Lion* againſt whom a whole village aſſembles, and who for all that retires with pride and indignation: all this is a *Lion* differently repreſented, but ſtill a *Lion*, which doth not afford us ideas different enough.

Sometimes Compariſons take us from objects that employ us moſt, by ſhowing us another object, that makes an unſeaſonable diverſion. I am ready to conſider two Armies, that are drawn out to engage, and I employ all my thoughts to obſerve the behaviour, order and diſpoſition of the Troops: on a ſudden, I am tranſported to the *Shores of a Sea, which is ſwell'd by the fury of the winds*, and I am in more danger to behold ſhipwreck'd Veſſels, than broken Battalions. Theſe vaſt thoughts which the Sea affords me, efface the former. Another repreſents to me a *Mountain* or a *Foreſt all on fire*. Whither doth not the idea of ſuch a burning carry one? If I were not a perfect maſter of my own thoughts, I might inſenſibly be led to the laſt univerſal conflagration. From this terrible burning, I am hurried to an image of *Lightning*; and theſe diverſions ſo much take me off from the firſt image that employed me, that I loſe entirely that of the Battle.

We think to embelliſh objects by comparing them to eternal, immenſe, infinite Beings; but in truth we leſſen inſtead of advancing them. To ſay that a Woman is *as handſome as Madam* MAZARIN; is to praiſe her more, than if you compar'd her to the *Sun*: for the ſublime and wonderful create eſteem; the impoſſible and the fabulous deſtroy that very commendation, which they pretend to beſtow.

Truth was not the inclination of the firſt Ages; an uſeful lye, and a lucky falſhood gave reputation

to

to impoſtors, and pleaſure to the credulous. 'Twas the ſecret of the great and wiſe, to govern the ſimple ignorant herd. The vulgar, who paid a profound reſpect to myſterious errors, wou'd have deſpiſed naked truth, and 'twas thought a piece of prudence to cheat them. All their diſcourſes were fitted to ſo advantageous a deſign; in which there was nothing to be ſeen but fictions, allegories, and ſimilitudes; nothing appeared as it was in it ſelf. Specious and rhetorical out-ſides hid the truth of things; and compariſons too frequently uſed, hinder'd the Reader from minding the true objects, by amuſing him with reſemblances.

The genius of our Age is quite oppoſite to this ſpirit of Fables and falſe myſteries. We love plain truth; good ſenſe has gain'd ground upon the illuſions of fancy; and nothing ſatisfies us now-a-days, but ſolid Reaſon. To this alteration of humour, we may add that of knowledge; we have other notions of Nature, than the Antients had. The Heavens, that eternal manſion of ſo many Divinities, are nothing elſe with us, but an immenſe and fluid ſpace. The ſame Sun ſhines ſtill upon us; but we aſſign it another courſe; and inſtead of haſtening to ſet in the Sea, it goes to enlighten another World. The earth, which was immoveable in the opinion of the Antients, now turns round in ours, and is not to be equal'd for the ſwiftneſs of its motion. In ſhort, every thing is changed, Gods, Nature, Politicks, Manners, Humours, and Cuſtoms. Now is it to be ſuppoſed, that ſo many alterations ſhould not produce a mighty change in our Writings?

If HOMER were now alive, he would undoubtedly write admirable Poems; but then he would fit them to the preſent Age. Our Poets make bad ones, becauſe they model them by thoſe of the Antients, and order them according to Rules, which are changed with things that time hath alter'd.

I know there are certain eternal rules, grounded upon good ſenſe, built upon firm and ſolid Reaſon, that will always laſt: yet there are but few that bear this Character. Thoſe that relate to the Manners, Affairs and Cuſtoms of the antient Greeks, make but a weak impreſſion upon us at preſent. We may ſay of them as HORACE has ſaid of words, they have their certain period and duration. Some die with old age; *ita verborum interit ætas:* others periſh with their Nation, as well as their maxims of Government, which ſubſiſt not after the Empire is diſſolved. So 'tis plain, there are but very few, that have a right to prevail at all times; and it would be ridiculous to regulate matters wholly new by Laws that are extinct. Poetry would do ill to exact from us, what Religion and Juſtice do not obtain.

To this ſervile and too much affected imitation, is owing the ill ſucceſs of all our Poems. Our Poets had not genius enough to pleaſe without employing the Gods; nor addreſs to make a good uſe of what materials our Religion could afford them. Tied to the humour of Antiquity, but confined to the doctrines of this Age, they give the air of Mercury to our Angels, and that of the fabulous wonders of Paganiſm to our Miracles. This mixture of antient and modern, has made them ſucceed very ill. And we may ſay, that they neither know how to draw any advantage from their fictions, nor make a right uſe of our truths.

To conclude, the Poems of HOMER will always be a maſter-piece, but they are not a model always to be followed. They will form our judgment; and our judgment will regulate the preſent diſpoſition of things.

OF

OF THE

WONDERFUL,

That is found in the POEMS *of the* ANTIENTS.

IF we conſider the Wonderful in the Poems of Antiquity, diveſted of the fine thoughts, the ſtrong paſſions, and the noble expreſſions with which the Works of the Poets are adorn'd; if we conſider it, I ſay, deſtitute of all ornament, and come to examine it purely by it ſelf, I am perſuaded that to a man of good ſenſe, it will appear no leſs ridiculous, than that of Knight-Errantry. Nay, the latter is in this regard the diſcreeter of the two, becauſe it ſuppoſes all pernicious, diſhoneſt, and baſe things done by the miniſtry of Devils and Magicians; whereas the Poets have left the moſt infamous exploits to the management of their Gods and Goddeſſes. Yet this hinders not but that Poems have been always admired, and Books of Chivalry ridiculed. The firſt are admired for the wit and knowledge we find in them; and the other deſpiſed for the abſurdities they are fill'd with. The Wonderful in the Poems ſupports its fabulous extravagance by the Beauty of the diſcourſe, and by an infinite number of uſeful diſcoveries that accompany it. That of Chivalry diſcredits even the fooliſh invention of its fable, by the ridiculouſneſs of the Style in which it is written.

Be it how it will, the Wonderful in the Poems has begotten that of Knight-Errantry; and certain it is, that the Devils and Conjurers cauſe much leſs harm in this way of writing, than the Gods and their Miniſters did in the former. The Goddeſs of Arts, of Knowledge, and Wiſdom, inſpires the braveſt of all the Greeks [1] with an ungovernable fury, and ſuffers him not to recover his ſenſes ſhe had taken from him, but only to make him capable of perceiving his folly, and by this means to kill himſelf out of meer ſhame and deſpair. The greateſt and moſt prudent of the Goddeſſes [2] favours ſcandalous Paſſions, and lends her aſſiſtance to carry on a criminal Amour. The ſame Goddeſs employs all ſorts of Artifices to deſtroy a handful of innocent people, who by no means deſerved her indignation. She thought it not enough to exhauſt her own power, and that of the other Gods, whom ſhe ſollicited to ruin ÆNEAS, but even corrupts the God of ſleep to caſt PALINURUS into a ſlumber; and ſo to order matters that he might drop into the Sea; this piece of treachery ſucceeded, and the poor Pilot periſh'd in the waves.

There is not one of the Gods in theſe Poems, that does not bring the greateſt misfortunes upon men, or hurry them on to the blackeſt actions. Nothing is ſo villainous here below, which is not executed by their order, or authoriz'd by their example: and this it was, that principally contributed to give birth to the Sect of the Epicureans, and afterwards to ſupport it. EPICURUS, LUCRETIUS, and PETRONIUS, would rather make their Gods idle, and enjoy their immortal Nature in an uninterrupted tranquillity, than ſee them active, and cruelly employ'd in ruining ours.

[1] *Ajax the Son of Telamon.*
[2] *Juno in the Æneid.*

Nay, EPICURUS by doing ſo, pretended he ſhew'd his great reſpect to the Gods; and from hence proceeded that ſaying which my Lord BACON ſo much admires: *Non Deos vulgi negare profanum, ſed vulgi opiniones Diis applicare profanum* [3].

Now I don't mean by this, that we are oblig'd to diſcard the Gods out of our Works, and much leſs from thoſe of Poetry, where they ſeem to enter more naturally than any where elſe:

Ab Jove principium Muſæ.

I am for introducing them as much as any man: but then I would have them bring their wiſdom, juſtice and clemency along with them, and not appear, as we generally make them, like a pack of impoſtors and aſſaſſins. I would have them come with a conduct to regulate, and not with a diſorder to confound every thing.

Perhaps it may be reply'd, that theſe extravagancies ought only to paſs for fables and fictions, which belong to the juriſdiction of Poetry. But I wou'd fain know, what Art and Science in the world has the power to exclude good Senſe? If we need only write in verſe to be privileged in all extravagancies; for my part, I would never adviſe any man to meddle with proſe, where he muſt immediately be pointed at for a coxcomb, if he leaves good ſenſe and reaſon never ſo little behind him.

I wonder extremely, that the Antient Poets, were ſo ſcrupulous to preſerve probability in the actions

[3] *Diogenes Laertius has tranſmitted to us that ſaying of Epicurus. M. de St. Evremond quotes it according to the Tranſlation of my Lord Bacon,* Serm. Fidel. cap. xvi. *but this is more literal:* Impius eſt, non is qui multitudinis Deos tollit; ſed qui multitudinis opiniones Diis adhibet. *Diog. Laert.* Lib. x. §. 123.

actions of men; and violated it after ſo abominable a manner, when they come to recount the actions of the Gods. Even thoſe who have ſpoken of their Nature more ſoberly than the reſt, could not forbear to ſpeak extravagantly of their conduct. When they eſtabliſh their Being, and their Attributes, they make them immortal, infinite, almighty, perfectly wiſe, and perfectly good. But at the very moment they ſet them a working, there is no weakneſs to which they don't make them ſtoop; there is no folly or wickedneſs which they don't make them commit.

We have two common Sayings, which appear to be directly oppoſite to one another, and yet I look upon both to be very probable. The one is, that *Poetry is the Language of the Gods*; the other, that *there is not ſuch a fool in nature as a Poet*. Poetry, that expreſſes with force and vigour, thoſe impetuous Paſſions that diſturb mankind; that paints the wonders of the univerſe in lively expreſſions, does elevate things purely natural, as it were above nature, by the ſublimity of its thoughts, and the magnificence of its diſcourſe, which may juſtly enough be called *the Language of the Gods*. But when Poets come once to quit this noble field of paſſions and wonders, to ſpeak of the Gods, they abandon themſelves to the caprice of their own imagination, in matters which they do not underſtand; and their heat having no juſt idea's to govern it, inſtead of making themſelves, as they vainly believe, wholly divine, they are in truth *the moſt extravagant fools in the World*. It will be no difficult matter to be convinced of this truth, if we conſider that this abſurd and fabulous Theology, is equally contrary to all notions of Religion, and all principles of good Senſe. There have been ſome Philoſophers that have founded Religion upon that knowledge which men may have of the Deity

by their natural Reaſon. There have been Law-givers too that have ſtiled themſelves the interpreters of the will of Heaven, to eſtabliſh a religious worſhip, which has not had reaſon to ſupport it. But to make, as the Poets have done, a perpetual Commerce, a familiar Society, and if I may uſe the expreſſion, a mixture of Men and Gods, againſt Religion and Reaſon, is certainly the boldeſt, and perhaps the moſt ſenſeleſs thing that ever was.

It remains now to conſider, whether the character of a Poem has virtue to rectify that of impiety and folly. Now, as I take it, we don't aſcribe ſo much power to the ſecret force of any charm. That which is bad, is bad for good and all; that which is extravagant, can be made good ſenſe in no reſpect. As for the reputation of the Poet, it rectifies nothing any more than the character of the Poem does. Diſcernment is a ſlave to no body. That which is effectually bad, is not at all the better for being found in the moſt celebrated Author: and that which is juſt and ſolid, is never the worſe for coming from an indifferent hand. Amongſt a hundred fine and lofty thoughts, a good judge will ſoon diſcover an extravagant one, which one's genius threw out when it was warm, and which too ſtrong an imagination was able to maintain againſt unfixt reflections. On the other hand, in the courſe of an infinite number of extravagant things, this ſame judge will admire certain beauties, where the mind, in ſpite of its impetuoſity, was juſt and regular.

The elevation of HOMER, and his other noble qualities, don't hinder me from taking notice of the falſe character of his Gods: and that agreeable and judicious equality of VIRGIL, that pleaſes all true judges, does not conceal from me the little merit of his ÆNEAS. If among ſo many noble

things which affect me in HOMER and VIRGIL, I cannot forbear to remark what is defective in them; ſo amongſt thoſe paſſages that diſpleaſe me in LUCAN, either for being too flat, or weary me for being too far carried on; I cannot forbear to pleaſe my ſelf in conſidering the juſt and true grandeur of his Heroes. I endeavour to reliſh every word in him, when he expreſſes the ſecret movements of CESAR at the ſight of POMPEY's Head; and nothing eſcapes me in that inimitable Diſcourſe of LABIENUS and CATO, where they debate whether they ſhall conſult the Oracle of JUPITER AMMON, to know the deſtiny of the Commonwealth [4].

If all the antient Poets had ſpoken as worthily of the Oracles of their Gods, I ſhould make no ſcruple to prefer them to the Divines and Philoſophers of our time; and 'tis a paſſage that may ſerve for an example in this matter, to all ſucceeding Poets. One may ſee in the concourſe of ſo many people that came to conſult the Oracle of AMMON, what effects a publick opinion can produce, where zeal and ſuperſtition mingle together. One may ſee in LABIENUS, a pious ſenſible man, who to his reſpect for the Gods, joins that conſideration and eſteem we ought to preſerve for true Virtue in good men. CATO is a religious, ſevere Philoſopher, weaned from all vulgar opinions, who entertains thoſe lofty thoughts of the Gods, which pure undebauched Reaſon, and a truly elevated wiſdom can give us of them. Every thing here is Poetical, every thing here is conſonant to ſenſe and truth; it is not Poetical upon the ſcore of any ridiculous fiction, or for ſome extravagant hyperbole, but for the daring greatneſs and majeſty of the Language, and for the noble elevation of the diſcourſe. 'Tis

[4] *See Lucan's* Pharſalia, *Lib.* ix.

thus, that Poetry is the language of the Gods, and that Poets are wiſe: and 'tis ſo much the greater wonder to find it in LUCAN, becauſe it is neither to be met with in HOMER or VIRGIL!

AN

ELUCIDATION

Of what I ſaid of the

Italian Muſick[1].

I Have met with ſo bad treatment as to what concerns the Italians, that I am under a neceſſity of vindicating my ſelf to perſons whoſe approbation I might deſire, and whoſe cenſure I might fear. I declare then, that after having heard SYPHACE, BALLARINI, and BUZZOLINI with attention, and examin'd their ſinging with the ſmall genius and ſkill that I am maſter of, I found they ſung divinely well; and if I could hit upon terms that were beyond this expreſſion, I would make uſe of them to add a greater value to their capacity.

I can make no certain judgment of the French. They put the Paſſions in too great a commotion; they diſorder our affections ſo mightily, that we loſe the liberty of judging, which others have left us, to find out the certainty of their merit in the exactneſs of our approbations.

The

[1] *See above, pag. 177 and ſeqq.*

The firſt inſtitution of Muſick was made to keep our Soul in a ſoft repoſe; or to reſtore it to its due ſituation, in caſe it was out of it. They, who from an equal knowledge of Manners and Singing, follow orders ſo uſefully eſtabliſh'd, deſerve praiſe. The French have no manner of regard to thoſe Principles: they inſpire fear, pity, ſorrow; they diſquiet, agitate, and diſturb when they pleaſe; they excite the Paſſions which others allay; they win the heart by a Charm which we might call a kind of ſeduction. Is your ſoul tender and ſenſible? Do you love to be touch'd? Hear ROCHOUAS, BAUMAVIEL, DUMENIL, thoſe ſecret maſters of the heart, who likewiſe ſtudy the grace and beauty of action, in order to make our eyes declare in their favour. But would you admire capacity, ſkill, and profoundneſs in difficult things; a facility of ſinging every thing without ſtudy, the art of adjuſting the compoſition to one's voice, inſtead of accomodating one's voice to the intention of the compoſer? Would you admire an incredible length of breath for quavering, a ſurprizing glibneſs of the throat in running diviſions? Hear SYPHACE, BELLARINI, and BUZZOLINI, who diſdaining the falſe movements of the heart, addreſs themſelves to your nobleſt part, and conquer your moſt ſolid Reaſon.

A LETTER TO THE DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

MADAM,

I Am not ſo vain as to ask your approbation, and you have too much judgment to give it me; but ſince ill-humour accompanies exactneſs of judging, I intreat you, Madam, do not cenſure me generally upon every thing I ſay, nor condemn me for every thing I do. If I ſpeak, I expreſs my meaning ill; if I hold my tongue, I harbour a malicious thought; if I refuſe to diſpute, 'tis ignorance; if I do diſpute, 'tis obſtinacy or unfairneſs; if I agree to what is ſaid, no body cares for my complaiſance; if I am of a contrary opinion, never was ſuch a contradictious man ſeen. When I produce good reaſons, Madam hates arguers of the caſe: when I alledge examples, that is her averſion: with relation to what is paſt, I am a teller of old ſtories; as to the preſent, ſhe ranks me among old dotards; and as to the future, an *Iriſh Prophet*[2] would be ſooner credited than I.

As

[2] *See Vol. I. pag.* 189.

As all things have their ſeaſons, Converſation ends, and Play begins, where, if I loſe, I am the bubble; if I win I am the ſharper; and if I leave off, a clown. If I have a mind to walk, I have the reſtleſneſs of youth; and reſt, to be ſure, is the heavineſs and drowſineſs of my old Age. If I am yet animated with paſſion, I am call'd an old fool; if Reaſon governs the inclinations of my mind, I am told that I am in love with nothing, and that no man's indifference was ever equal to mine. Contraries are equally diſadvantageous to me; when I intend to amend one thing which you were diſpleaſed withal, I do another thing quite contrary, and thereby diſpleaſe you as much as before. In the condition I am now in, I dread, leſt I ſhould commit a miſtake; and am afraid, leſt I ſhould do right. You never forgive any of my errors; you hate me when I am in the right; and I am ſo unhappy as to be often the object of your hatred.

This, Madam, is the ordinary treatment I receive at your hands; this is it, that makes me deſire your abſence. But by thinking of your peeviſh humours too much, I have not ſufficiently reflected on your Charms, nor conſidered that the greateſt of all misfortunes muſt be that of not ſeeing you. I have been able to tell you the pains I ſuffer when I am with you, but thoſe which I feel when I am abſent from you, are paſt expreſſion. 'Tis not in the power of words to expreſs my grief. *I cannot ſpeak, Madam, but I die* [1].

I have ended my Letter, Dying; but the Virtue of your Charms is able to revive thoſe whom your rigour has ſtruck dead. The firſt thing I have to beg of you, Madam, is, that you would abate your ſeverity and cruelty towards me, in the new

[1] *A verſe of Corneille.*

new Life that I am going to lead with you. Divide the ſeverity of your juſtice; let part of it fall on M. VILLIERS; let not your Chaplain be without his ſhare of it; nor let honeſt LOT eſcape for all her care about your Domeſtick affairs; let the Princes and the Nobility ſometimes take part of the burthen upon them, that the Gentry may have ſome eaſe; and, in fine, Madam, let not me be the only perſon pitch'd upon to bear your anger and paſſion, to make way for your kindneſſes and civilities to others.

ON

ON THE MORALS OF EPICURUS:

TO THE *MODERN LEONTIUM*[1].

YOU desire to be informed, whether I compoſed thoſe *Reflections upon the Doctrine of Epicurus*, which are attributed to me: I might honour my ſelf with them[2]; but I don't love to give my ſelf a merit which I have no right to; for to deal ingenuouſly with you, they are not mine. I have a great diſadvantage in theſe little Treatiſes, that are printed under my name. There are ſome good performances which I do not own, becauſe they don't belong to me; and amongſt my Writings, they have inſerted abundance of impertinent things, which

[1] *Leontium, was an Athenian Lady, who hath been celebrated for her intrigues, and her knowledge of Philoſophy, which ſhe learn'd from Epicurus. By the* MODERN LEONTIUM, *M. de St. Evremond here means Madam L'Enclos. See the* Life of M. de St. Evremond, *in the year* 1685.

[2] *Thoſe* Reflections *are inſerted in the third Volume, among* the beſt Pieces atttibuted to M. de St. Evremond.

which I don't take the trouble to diſown. At my Age, one hour of Life well managed is more conſiderable with me, than the concern of an indifferent Reputation. With what difficulty a man parts with Self-love? I quit it as an Author; I reſume it as a Philoſopher, finding a ſecret pleaſure in neglecting what others ſo earneſtly purſue.

The word *Pleaſure* recalls EPICURUS into my mind; and makes me confeſs, that of all the Opinions of Philoſophers concerning the ſoveraign Good, none appears to me ſo rational as his. It would be to no purpoſe to alledge here the reaſons, that have been given a hundred times by the Epicureans; that the Love of Pleaſure, and the avoiding of Grief, are the firſt and moſt natural motions, that are obſerved in men; that riches, power, honour, and virtue may contribute to our happineſs: but that the ſole enjoyment of Pleaſure, is, to ſpeak all, the ſingle end to which our actions tend. 'Tis a thing clear enough of it ſelf, and I am fully perſuaded of it. At the ſame time I don't well know what this *Pleaſure* of EPICURUS was; for I never ſaw learned Men ſo divided about any point, as they have been about the Morals of this Philoſopher. Philoſophers, and even ſome of his own Diſciples, have exclaimed againſt him, as a ſenſual and lazy perſon, that never quitted his idleneſs but to make a debauch. All Sects have oppoſed his. Magiſtrates have looked upon his Doctrine to be prejudicial to the publick. CICERO, ſo juſt and ſo wiſe in his opinions; and PLUTARCH, ſo much eſteemed for his judgment, have not been favourable to him. And as for the Chriſtians, the antient Fathers have made him paſs for the greateſt and moſt dangerous of impious perſons. Thus I have ſhown you his enemies; now let us ſee who his Friends were.

METRO-

METRODORUS, HERMACHUS, MENECEUS, and many others that uſed to diſpute with him, had as much veneration as friendſhip for his perſon. DIOGENES LAERTIUS could not write his Life with more advantage to his reputation than he has done: LUCRETIUS was his adorer; SENECA, as much an enemy as he was to his ſect, hath mentioned him with praiſe. If ſome Cities have expreſs'd an averſion for him, others have erected ſtatues in his honour; and among the Chriſtians, if the Fathers have cried him down, GASSENDUS and M. BERNIER do vindicate him.

In the midſt of all theſe authorities, ſo oppoſite one to the other, what way is there to decide the controverſy? Shall I ſay that EPICURUS is a corrupter of good Manners, upon the credit of a jealous Philoſopher, or a diſcontented Diſciple, who perhaps ſuffer'd himſelf to be blindly led by his own reſentments, for ſome imagin'd injury? Beſides, ſince 'tis evident that EPICURUS aimed to ruin the common received opinion about Providence, and the Immortality of the Soul, cannot I eaſily perſuade my ſelf that the world appear'd againſt a doctrine that gave ſo much ſcandal; and that they defamed the life of the Philoſopher, on purpoſe to diſcredit his opinions with more authority? But if I am unwilling to receive all that his enemies and his rivals have publiſhed of him, ſo I do not eaſily believe what his defenders dare ſay. I don't think that he had a deſign to introduce a *Pleaſure* more ſevere than the Virtue of the Stoicks. This jealouſy of auſterity ſeems to me extravagant in a voluptuous Philoſopher, take his Pleaſure in what ſenſe you pleaſe. A pretty myſtery this, to declaim againſt a Virtue that diveſts a wiſe man of his ſenſes, to eſtabliſh a Pleaſure that affords him no motion! The wiſe Man of the Stoicks is a virtuous Inſenſible; that of the Epicureans a voluptuous

tuous Immoveable: the firſt is in pain without pain; the ſecond taſtes pleaſure without pleaſure. What reaſon had a Philoſopher, who did not believe the immortality of the ſoul, to mortify the ſenſes? why ſhould he put a divorce between two parts, compoſed of the ſame matter, that ought to find their advantage in the mutual concord and union of their pleaſures? I pardon in our Religious men the ſad ſingularity of eating nothing but Herbs, ſince they think to obtain eternal happineſs by theſe auſterities: but that a Philoſopher, who knows no other good things than thoſe of this world; that the Doctor of Pleaſure ſhould regale himſelf with bread and water to arrive at the ſovereign happineſs of life, is what my little underſtanding cannot comprehend. If EPICURUS was ſuch a man, I admire that they don't make his pleaſure center in Death; for if we conſider the miſery of life, his chiefeſt good ſhould have been to get rid of it. Believe me, if HORACE and PETRONIUS had imagin'd him to have been ſuch a one as he is deſcribed, they would not have choſen him to be their maſter in the ſcience of Pleaſures.

As for what ſome people pretend of his great piety towards the Gods, 'tis no leſs ridiculous than the mortification of his ſenſes. Thoſe idle Gods from whom he had nothing to hope or fear; thoſe impotent beings did not merit the trouble of his worſhip: and let not people ſay, that he went to the Temples, for fear of drawing the Magiſtrates upon him, and ſcandalizing his Citizens; for he had much leſs ſcandaliz'd them by not aſſiſting at their Sacrifices, than he offended them by his Writings, which deſtroyed the Gods eſtabliſh'd in the world, or at leaſt ruined that confidence the people had in their protection.

But now, some one will say to me, What think you of EPICURUS? you believe neither his friends nor his enemies; his adversaries nor his defenders; what then is your judgment of him? I'm of opinion, that EPICURUS was a very wise Philosopher, who, according to different times and occasions, loved pleasure in repose, or pleasure in motion; and that this different Pleasure has occasion'd the different reputation he has found in the world. TIMOCRATES and his other enemies, have charg'd him with sensual pleasures; those that have defended him, talk of nothing but of spiritual pleasures. The former accuse him of expensive banquets, and I am persuaded that the accusation is well grounded: when the latter value him for his eating some little morsels of cheese, in order to make better chear than usual, I believe they don't want reason. When one side says, that he argued with LEONTIUM, they say true: when the other affirms, that he diverted himself with her, they don't misrepresent him. *There is a time to laugh, and a time to weep*, according to SOLOMON; a time to be sober, and a time to be sensual, according to EPICURUS. Besides a voluptuous man is not equally so all his life. In Religion, the greatest Libertine becomes sometimes the most devout: in the study of Wisdom, the most indulgent to pleasure, is sometimes the most severe. As for me, I look otherwise upon EPICURUS in youth and health, than in old age and sickness.

Indolence and tranquillity, that happiness of idle people and sick persons, cannot be better expres'd, than they are in his writings: sensual Pleasure is no less explained in that formal passage which CICERO expresly alledges [1]. I know, indeed, that all imaginable care has been taken to destroy its credit,

[1] Tuscul. Disput. *Lib.* III. §. 18.

dit, and to invalidate it: but are mere conjectures to be compared with the teſtimony of CICERO, who was ſo well acquainted with the Philoſophers of Greece, and their opinions? It were much better to aſcribe to the inconſtancy of human nature, the inequality of our minds. Where is a man ſo uniform as to have nothing unequal, and contradictory in his diſcourſe and actions? SOLOMON deſerves the name of *Wiſe*, at leaſt as much as EPICURUS, and was equally miſtaken in his opinions and conduct. MONTAIGNE, when he was a young man, believed that our thoughts ought to be eternally fixed upon Death, that we might be prepared for it: when he came to be old, he *recanted*, and would have us ſuffer our ſelves to be ſweetly conducted by Nature, that will ſufficiently teach us to die.

M. BERNIER, that great favourer of EPICURUS, doth now confeſs, that *after he has ſtudied Philoſophy fifty years, he doubts even of thoſe things that he had believed to be the moſt certain* [4]. All objects have different faces, and our mind, which is in a continual motion, looks upon them differently as it does conſider them; ſo that, if I may be allow'd the expreſſion, we have nothing but new aſpects, while we think we enjoy new diſcoveries. Beſides, age brings great alterations in our humour, and by the alteration of humour, is very often introduced that of our opinions. To this we may add, that the pleaſures of the ſenſes ſometimes make us diſreliſh the ſatisfaction of the mind, as too jejune and naked; and that the nice and refined ſatisfactions of the mind, deſpiſe in their turn the pleaſures of the ſenſes, as too groſs. So we ought not to be ſurprized, that, in ſo great a diverſity

[4] Abregé de la Philoſophie de Gaſſendi, *Tom.* II. *pag.* 379, *of the edition printed at Lyons in* 1684.

diverſity of proſpects and motions, EPICURUS, who writ more than any Philoſopher, ſhould ſay the ſame thing in a different manner, according as he might have different thoughts and notions of it.

What occaſion is there for this general argument, to ſhew that he had no averſion to all ſorts of Pleaſures? If you conſider his commerce with the Ladies, you'll ſcarce believe that he ſpent ſo much time with LEONTIUM and THEMISTA, to do nothing but talk of Philoſophy with them. But if he loved the enjoyment of them as a voluptuous perſon, he manag'd himſelf prudently; and, as he was indulgent to the motions of nature, ſo he diſliked that any violence ſhould be offered to it; not always reckoning Chaſtity for a virtue, but always accounting Luxury a vice. He would have ſobriety regulate the appetite, and that the preſent meal ſhould never hurt that which was to ſucceed: *ſic præſentibus voluptatibus utaris, ut futuris non noceas.* He diſengaged Pleaſures from the uneaſineſs that precede, and the diſtaſte that follows them. When he fell into infirmities and pains, he fixed the ſovereign Good in Indolence: wiſely, in my opinion, if we conſider the condition he was then in; for the ceſſation of pain is the happineſs of thoſe that languiſh under it. As for the Tranquillity of Mind, which compoſed the other part of his happineſs, 'tis nothing but an exemption from trouble: but he who can no longer have agreeable motions, is happy, if he can preſerve himſelf from the vexations of pain.

After all I have ſaid upon this article, I conclude, that Indolence and Repoſe ought to make the ſovereign Good of EPICURUS, when he was infirm and languiſhing: but for a man who is in a condition to taſte Pleaſure, I'm of opinion that health ſhows it ſelf by ſomething more lively than a bare Indolence; as a good diſpoſition of the ſoul requires

ſomething more animated than a peaceable ſtate. We live in the midſt of an infinite number of Goods and Evils, and with ſenſes capable of being affected with the one, and tormented with the other: without very much Philoſophy, a little reaſon will make us reliſh good things as deliciouſly as poſſible, and inſtruct us to bear the bad with all the patience we can.

OF

RETIREMENT.

THere's nothing more common with old Men, than to deſire a Retirement, and nothing ſo rare with them as not to repent it, when they are once retir'd. Their ſouls, that are in too great a ſubjection to their humours, are diſguſted with the world for their own tireſomneſs; for ſcarce have they quitted this falſe object of their misfortune, but they are as angry with ſolitude, as they were with the world, being uneaſy at themſelves, where nothing but themſelves can give them any uneaſineſs.

An eſſential reaſon that obliges us to withdraw our ſelves out of the World when we are old, is to prevent that ridicule and contempt to which age generally expoſes us. If we quit the World in good time, they will ſtill preſerve the idea of that merit, which we had there. If we tarry too long in it, our defects will lie open; and what we are then, will efface the memory of what we were. Beſides, 'tis a ſhame for a perſon of honour to drag about him

him the infirmities of age at the Court, where the end of his ſervices occaſions that of his intereſt.

Nature teaches us to reaſſume our liberty, when we have nothing more to hope from fortune. 'Tis what a ſenſe of decency, what the care of our reputation, what good manners, and nature it ſelf require from us. Nor is this all, for the world has likewiſe a right to demand the ſame thing of us. Its commerce furniſh'd us with pleaſures while we were capable of reliſhing 'em: and it would be ingratitude to be a burden to it, when we can give it nothing but diſguſt.

As for my ſelf, I am fully reſolved to live in a Convent, or a Deſart, rather than to give my friends an occaſion to pity me, or to furniſh thoſe that are not ſo, with a ſubject for their malicious mirth and raillery. But the miſchief is, that a man is not ſenſible when he becomes either weak or ridiculous. It is not enough to know that we are gone for good and all; but we ought to be the firſt that perceive our ſelves to be upon the decline, and like prudent men, to prevent the publick knowledge of this change.

Not that every alteration that age brings along with it, ought to inſpire us with the reſolution of retiring. I own, we loſe a great deal by growing old; but amongſt the loſſes we ſuſtain, ſome of them are recompens'd by conſiderable advantages. If after I have loſt my Paſſions, the Affections continue with me ſtill; I ſhall find leſs inquietude in my pleaſures, and more diſcretion in the conduct of my life in relation to the world. If my Imagination decays, I ſhall not pleaſe ſo much ſometimes; but then I ſhall be infinitely leſs troubleſom for the general part. If I quit the crowd for a ſelect company, my thoughts will be more compos'd. If I come from a large acquaintance to the converſation

of a few; 'tis becauſe I know how to make a better choice.

Beſides, 'tis to be conſider'd, that if we change, we do it amongſt people that change as well as our ſelves: men of equal infirmities, or at leaſt ſubject to the very ſame. Therefore I ſhall not be at all aſham'd to ſearch in their preſence ſome relief againſt the weakneſs of Age; nor ſhall I be afraid to ſupply by art, what begins to fail me by nature. A nicer precaution againſt the injury of time, a more careful management of a health that daily becomes more feeble, cannot ſcandalize any man of ſenſe, and we ought not to trouble our ſelves with thoſe that are not ſo.

To ſay the truth, that which diſpleaſes in old people, is not too affected a care of their own preſervation. We ſhould eaſily forgive them every thing that relates to themſelves, if they had but the ſame conſideration for others. But the Authority they aſſume, is full of injuſtice and indiſcretion; for they prepoſterouſly thwart the inclinations even of thoſe that bear the moſt with their infirmities. Their long courſe of life, it ſeems, has untaught them how to converſe with mankind; for they ſhew nothing but a ſpirit of Moroſeneſs, Auſterity, and Contradiction, to thoſe very perſons from whom they exact affability, docility, and obedience. All that they themſelves do, they imagine to be virtuous; and place among vices every thing that lies out of their power. And as they are conſtrain'd to follow Nature where ſhe is tireſom and offenſive, they would have others oppoſe what is ſweet and agreeable in her.

There is no part of our life wherein we ought to ſtudy our own Humour with more application than in old age; for it is never ſo difficult to be diſcover'd as then. An impetuous young fellow has a hundred returns, when he is diſſatisfied with his

his Extravagancies: but old people devote themſelves to their Humour as if it was a virtue; and take pleaſure in their own defects, becauſe they carry a falſe reſemblance of the moſt commendable qualities. In effect, as they grow more difficult, they vainly imagine that they become more delicate. They take up an averſion to Pleaſure, believing that they are juſtly oppoſing the current of Vice. A ſerious air paſſes with them for judgment; phlegm for wiſdom: and hence proceeds that ſupercilious authority they allow themſelves to cenſure every thing: Spleen ſupplying the place of indignation againſt ſin; and Gravity of ſufficiency.

The only ſure remedy when we are come to this paſs, is to conſult our Reaſon in the intervals, when ſhe is diſengag'd from our humour; and to take a reſolution to conceal our defects from the ſight of the world. 'Tis all that our wiſdom can do at this juncture to hide them, and it would be a ſuperfluous labour to endeavour wholly to get clear of them. 'Tis at this point of our Life that we ought to aſſign ſome time between it and Death, and to chuſe a convenient place to paſs it in Devotion if poſſible, at leaſt with Prudence; either with a devotion that gives us confidence, or with reaſon that promiſes us repoſe. When our Reaſon, which qualified us for the world, is, if I may uſe the expreſſion, worn out with long uſing, a wiſe man forms another out of it to ſerve him in his Retreat, which of ridiculous fools, as we were growing in converſation, makes us truly wiſe in reſpect of our ſelves.

Of all the Retreats that a man can chuſe when he is Old, I ſhould infinitely prefer that of a Convent to all the reſt, if their Rules were leſs ſevere. 'Tis certain that old age ſhuns a crowd, out of a nice and retired humour, that cannot endure to be either importun'd or tired; and yet it avoids ſolitude

with greater diligence, where it becomes a prey to its own black diſquietudes, or to ſullen vexatious imaginations. The only remaining relief againſt all this, is the Converſation of a virtuous Society: now, what Society can better agree with it than a religious one, where one would think, all manner of human helps ſhould be afforded, with more charity than elſewhere, and where their vows ſhould be united to demand thoſe ſuccours from heaven, which cannot reaſonably be expected from men.

It is as natural for old people to take up with Devotion, as it is ordinary with young men to abandon themſelves to Pleaſures. In the latter, Nature full charg'd, throws out of her ſelf her ſuperfluity of vigour, hunting after voluptuouſneſs in external Objects: in the others, languiſhing Nature ſeeks in God what ſhe has loſt, and adheres more cloſely to him, to provide for her ſelf a kind of reſource in her decay. Thus the ſame ſpirit that leads to Society in our wants, conducts us to God in our languiſhings; and if Convents were inſtituted as they ought to be, we ſhould find in the ſame place both the ſupport of Heaven, and the aſſiſtance of Men: but after the manner they are ſettled, inſtead of an alleviation of our miſeries, we find there the hardſhip of a blind obedience, either in the performance of unprofitable things, or in the forbearance of innocent ones. We find there an ordinary ſacrifice of Reaſon; Laws more difficult to be obſerv'd than the divine and political; Ordinances ſcandalouſly broke by Libertines, and impatiently borne by the moſt ſubmiſſive.

I confeſs, we meet ſometimes with ſome religious perſons of an ineſtimable merit; ſuch as knew the Vanities of the world which they have quitted; and the grimace of that kind of life which they have embrac'd. Theſe are truly virtuous and devout men, who refine the dictates of Morality by thoſe

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of Piety. They live not only exempt from the perturbation of paſſions, but enjoy a moſt admirable ſerenity of mind; and are more happy in deſiring nothing, than the greateſt Monarchs in poſſeſſing all. Such examples are indeed very rare: and the virtue of thoſe religious perſons is more to be admir'd, than their condition to be embraced.

For my part, I would never adviſe a Gentleman to engage in ſuch obligations, wherein all the rights of one's will are generally loſt and ſwallow'd up. The pains which a man would willingly undergo, is made neceſſary; the ſin he deſigns to avoid, muſt be ſhun'd by injunction, and the good which he would do, is to be purſu'd by conſtraint. Common ſlavery goes no farther than to force us to what we are unwilling to do: that of Convents lays a neceſſity upon us, even in things that we are willing to perform.

The late Queen of Portugal[1], who was as capable to manage her own conduct in tranquillity, as to govern a ſtate in a ſtorm, had the fancy to turn Nun, upon her reſigning the Government to her Son[2]: but after having examin'd the rules of all the religious orders, with as much care as judgment, ſhe found none that allow'd either the Body the neceſſary conveniences of Life, or the Mind a reaſonable ſatisfaction. 'Tis certain, that the idea of a Convent is agreeable to one who ſeeks innocence andrepoſe; but 'tis a hard matter to find there the contentment one fancied. If he does, which happens very rarely, he does not enjoy it long; and the beſt caution one can uſe againſt entering into a Monaſtery, is to conſider that the generality of

[1] *Luiſa-Franciſca de Guſman, Daughter to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and Wife to Don Juan Duke of Bragança, who afterwards became King of Portugal. She died the* 18th *of February* 1666.

[2] *Don Alfonſo.*

thoſe religious perſons continue there with regret, and get out from thence, when they can, with joy.

I could wiſh we had eſtabliſh'd Societies, where Gentlemen might commodiouſly retire, after they have done the publick all the ſervice they were able. When they were once enter'd here, whether out of a conſideration of their future ſtate, a diſlike of the World, or a deſire of Tranquillity, after ſo many different agitations of fortune, they might taſte the delight of a pious Retreat, and the innocent pleaſure of virtuous and agreeable converſation: but in this place of repoſe, I would have no other Rules than thoſe of Chriſtianity, which are generally receiv'd every where. And indeed, we have ills enough to ſuffer, and ſins to commit, without creating new torments, and new crimes, by new Inſtitutions. 'Tis a piece of folly, to ſeek far from Court, a Retreat where a man will live with more hardſhip, and damn himſelf with more eaſe, than in the converſation of men.

I hate the auſterity of thoſe, who, to enlarge duty, leave no room for good-will: they make all center in the neceſſity of obeying, without any other reaſon, than conſtantly to exerciſe our obedience; and, becauſe they ſtill delight in enjoying their power. Now, I don't like ſubjection to their fancy; and am only for docility to a wiſe and diſcreet conduct. It is not reaſonable, that the ſmall remainder of liberty, which Nature preſerves from the laws of Politicks and Religion, ſhould be wholly loſt in the Inſtitutions of theſe new Legiſlators; and that perſons who enter a Monaſtery, thro' the notion of eaſe and repoſe, ſhould find nothing there but ſlavery and pain.

As for my ſelf, were I in ſuch a place, I would freely make ſhift without delights, at an age when a man's reliſh of pleaſures is, as it were, extinguiſh'd; but then I would have all conveniences,

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at a time when we more ſenſibly feel whatever offends us, as in proportion we become leſs nice in the purſuit of what pleaſes us, or are leſs tender in relation to what affects us. Theſe conveniences, deſirable in old Age, ought to be as far remov'd from plenty, that cauſes perplexity, as from want, which creates anxiety. To explain my thoughts more clearly, I would have in a Convent, a cleanly and well-manag'd frugality; where God ſhould not be look'd upon as a moroſe Maſter, who forbids agreeable things, becauſe they are pleaſing; but where nothing ſhould pleaſe ſound minds, but what's juſt, or entirely innocent.

When Monſieur FOUQUET was in priſon, the Mareſchal DE CLEREMBAUT had his head full of theſe thoughts about Retirement. "How "happy might a Man live, *ſaid he*, in a Society, "where he could diveſt fortune of that juriſdiction "ſhe pretends to have over him! We ſacrifice to "this fortune, our eſtates, our repoſe, our years, "perhaps unprofitably; and if we arrive to poſſeſs "its favours, we purchaſe the ſhort-liv'd enjoy-"ment, ſometimes at the expence of our liberty, "and ſometimes of our lives. But, ſuppoſe all "our greatneſs ſhould continue as long as we liv'd, "yet it would at leaſt expire with our ſelves. And "what uſe of their Grandeur have thoſe great "Favourites made, who never beheld the courſe "of their fortune interrupted? Don't they ſeem "to have acquir'd this mighty ſtock of glory, and "to have heap'd theſe prodigious riches for no "other end, than to make themſelves more ſen-"ſible of the torment of being neither able to quit "nor keep them?" This was his uſual diſcourſe for a whole month we were together; and that agreeable Courtier, whoſe converſation was the niceſt delight his friends enjoy'd, ſuffer'd himſelf to

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be entirely poſſeſs'd with this train of thoughts, ſometimes judicious, but always melancholy.

I confeſs there is a certain time when the wiſeſt action we can do, is to quit the World: but as fully perſuaded as I am of this truth, I ſhould infinitely ſooner be directed by Nature to retirement, than by my Reaſon. 'Tis by the impulſe of the former, that in the midſt of the World, I live now after ſuch a faſhion, as if I were retir'd out of it. I ſtill continue in it, as far as I ſeek what pleaſes me; and am ſtill out of it, as far as I avoid whatever incommodes me there. Every day I ſteal away from acquaintances that weary, and converſations that tire me. Every day I entertain my ſelf in a ſweet Commerce with my Friends, and find the moſt ſenſible pleaſure in their company.

After my way of living, I neither enjoy a full Society, nor a perfect Retirement. 'Tis only an innocent confining of my ſelf to thoſe delights, which beſt agree with my inclinations. Diſguſted with groſs Vice, and offended by the practice of too rigid Virtue, I poſſeſs all thoſe harmleſs pleaſures that are moſt ſuitable to the repoſe of old Age, and affect me in proportion to what I am capable of reliſhing with ſatisfaction.

When we approach our fatal Urn,
And Life's decreaſing lamp does feebly burn,
Nature to innocence inclin'd,
Purſues the pleaſures of the mind:
And ſhe, whoſe fierce impetuous heat
Fir'd ev'ry vein, now ſeeks a bleſt Retreat.
'Tis true, when Love's no more,
Our brighteſt Days are o'er;

But

But when our ſcorching Noon is paſt,
Soft Ev'ning's gentler light ſucceeds at laſt;
Then gladly we forget th' intemperate blaze,
Reaſon prevails o'er rage, and ſolid judgment ſways.

A

LETTER

OF

M. DE LA FONTAINE

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF BOUILLON[1].

MADAM,

WE begin here to murmur againſt the Engliſh, for detaining you ſo long among them. 'Tis my propoſal, that they ſhall ſurrender you to France, before the end of Autumn; and that we give them, by way of exchange, two or three Iſles in the Ocean. If nothing but my own private ſatisfaction were concern'd in this matter, I ſhould not grudge to give up the Ocean it ſelf to them: but after all, perhaps we have more reaſon to complain of your Siſter, than of England. 'Tis not

[1] *The Dutcheſs of Bouillon was Siſter to the Dutcheſs of Mazarin. This Letter was written in September* 1687.

not in our power to part with Madam MAZARIN, whenever we pleaſe. You are both of you encompas'd with every thing that makes the reſt of the World be eaſily forgotten; I mean with enchantments and graces of all kinds:

Love's Goddeſs look'd not half ſo gay,
On that important lucky day,
When Beauty's prize ſhe bore away:
Tho ſhe appear'd in all her pride,
With Cupid's dancing by her ſide.
Now ſhould the ſame diſpute ariſe,
The univerſal language of all eyes
To you wou'd ſoon adjudge the prize.
The Paphian Shepherds boaſt in vain,
Of VENUS, and her gaudy train,
But who cou'd not in Paphos reign?
Where e'er you pleaſe your courſe to bend,
Pleaſure, Mirth, and Love attend.
To ſome Sarmatian quarter go,
Cover'd with everlaſting Snow;
Where balmy Zephires never yet did blow;
The face of Nature ſtrait will ſmile,
Unbidden graſs will cloath the wandring ſoil:
And where your ſteps the naked ſurface greet,
Roſes ſpring up to kiſs your feet.

I am inform'd that your Highneſs is admired by all England for your wit, your behaviour, and a thouſand other qualities that charm them. This is ſo much the more glorious for you, becauſe the Engliſh are not the readieſt people in the world to admire Foreigners. I have only obſerved that they know true merit, and are pleas'd with it.

Your Philoſopher was exceedingly ſurpriz'd, when he was told that DESCARTES was not the inventor of this Syſtem, which we call *the Machine of Animals*; but that a Spaniard had diſcover'd it before him *. Tho he had not receiv'd the leaſt proof of this matter of fact, yet for all that I ſhould eaſily believe it; for I know of none but a Spaniard, that is able to build ſuch a Caſtle in the air as this. So I diſcover every day ſome opinion or other of DESCARTES ſcatter'd up and down in the Writings of the Antients; and particularly this, that there are no real *Colours* in the univerſe: they are only ſo many different effects of light upon a different ſuperficies. Adieu now to the lilies and roſes of our AMYNTAS. There is no ſuch thing as a white ſkin, or black hair: our paſſion has nothing for its foundation but a body without Colours: and after all this, ſhall I make Verſes upon the principal Beauty of Women?

Thoſe Gentleman that don't ſufficiently know how far your Highneſs's knowledge reaches, and the deſire you have to be capable of underſtanding every thing, without any other trouble, than only hearing it diſcours'd of at your table; will perhaps call my judgment in queſtion, for entertaining you thus with matters of Philoſophy: but I muſt inform them that every ſubject ſuits with your capacity, as doth every Book, provided it be a good one.

No Writers are to you unknown,
Nor ſubjects that they write upon.
You hear each ſyllable they ſay,
While with your Birds and Dogs you play.

Than

* *See M. Bayle's* Dictionary *in the Article of* Pereira.

Than the fam'd Roman you do more,
Who dictated at once to four.

This ſame worthy perſon, as I take it, was JULIUS CESAR, who, as we read, made four ſeveral diſpatches all at once, upon four different ſubjects. You are nothing inferior to him in this reſpect; and I remember, that as I was a reading to you ſome Verſes one morning, I found you very attentive at the ſame time, to what I read, and to three quarrels of your Dogs. 'Tis true, they were ready to ſtrangle one another: JUPITER *the Reconciler*, could not ſo happily have accommodated this affair. Let people judge by this, Madam, what a comprehenſive genius you have, and how far your penetration may reach, when it is only employ'd upon one ſubject. You paſs your judgment upon a thouſand ſorts of Works, and your judgment is never in the wrong.

To you the ſerious and the gay,
To you the tender and ſublime,
Their humble adorations pay,
The ſov'reign judge of Proſe and Rhime.
Fable and Hiſt'ry to you ſue;
But what can Fable do for you?
The Rev'rend Bards of Antient Rome,
With joy to your Tribunal come:
And all that France has ſeen of late,
From your deciſive Vote receives its fate.
You nothing want t' increaſe your ſtore,
And Phœbus cannot give you more.

Thus

Thus 'mong the numerous crowds that ſue,
And preſs to make their Court to you;
ANACREON ſhall in perſon come,
From your fair lips to take his doom.
WALLER, ST. EVREMOND, and I,
Will join to keep you company.
Who wou'd ANACREON turn away,
Always youthful, always gay?
Or who wou'd e'er refuſe to ſee
WALLER, ST. EVREMOND, and Me?

Tho his reſiſtleſs power to ſhow,
Time on their heads has ſhowr'd down ſnow:
What Bards, in great APOLLO's quire
Can boaſt a more enlivening fire?
What Muſe with eaſier plenty flows
Than ours, or fewer wrinkles ſhews?

Let Janſeniſts, long uſed to preach,
Their dull and uſeleſs Maxims teach;
You'll ſtill ANACREON's Lyre eſteem,
And ſuch as ſtrive to write like him:
You, to whoſe penetrating Wit
All Authors chearfully ſubmit.

Now I have mention'd ANACREON, I am almoſt in mind to invoke his Ghoſt; but upon ſecond thoughts, I think it will be better to raiſe him up for good and all. To effect this, I will find out ſome Gymnoſophiſt, I mean one of thoſe Gentlemen whom APOLLONIUS TYANEUS went to ſee. He learnt ſo many fine things of them, that he rais'd a young Woman from the dead. I ſhall

ſhall raiſe an old Poet. You, and Madam MAZARIN, ſhall call us together. We will meet in England, Mr. WALLER, Monſieur DE ST. EVREMOND, the merry old Greek, and my ſelf. Do you think, Madam, 'tis poſſible to find four Poets better match'd together? What a merry ſight will it be to ſee us four Bards, who make up at leaſt three hundred Years between us,

Our heads with roſy Chaplets crown'd,
Dance and trip it on the ground,
In grateful Hymns and praiſes join,
To celebrate the God of Wine.

After ſuch a meeting, and when I have ſent ANACREON back to the Elyſian Fields, I will demand of you my audience of leave. 'Tis convenient, that before this, I ſee five or ſix Engliſh Gentlemen, and as many Engliſh Ladies: (if report ſpeaks true, the latter are richly worth the ſeeing). I will put our Ambaſſadour[3] in mind of the new Street Des Petits-Champs, and of the devotion I have always had for him. I will deſire him, as alſo Monſieur DE BONREPAUX[4], to honour me with a Diſpatch. Thus Madam, I have told you almoſt all the buſineſs that will take me up in England. I had alſo framed a deſign to convert Madam HERVART, Madam DE GOUVERNET, and my Lady ELAND; becauſe they are perſons I exceedingly honour: but I am inform'd, that they are not yet in a diſpoſition to be wrought upon; and

[3] *Monſieur de Barillon, who was the French King's Ambaſſadour in England.*

[4] *He had been ſent to King James to negotiate ſome Affairs with him.*

and I, Madam, like PERRIN DANDIN[5], am juſt good for nothing, till both parties are weary of conteſting longer. There's one thing indeed, I ſhould deſire above all things in the world, which is, that you would procure me the honour to pay my devoirs to the King[6], but I dare not flatter my ſelf of that happineſs. He's ſo deſerving a Monarch, that it's worth any man's while to croſs the Sea on purpoſe to ſee him; ſo great a paſſion he expreſſes for glory, and ſo many royal qualities is he maſter of, which recommend a Prince. There are but few that poſſeſs the former of theſe talents, tho thoſe who are placed in ſo eminent a poſt, ought never to be without it.

True grandeur, and the art to reign,
Are no wild phantoms of the brain.
This Britain's active Monarch ſhows,
Whoſe life no lazy moments knows,
And ſcorns inglorious repoſe.
His buſy genius, like the ſoul,
Inſpires and animates the whole.
While happy Albion, by his care,
Does wealth, and peace, and plenty ſhare.
Not Lovers run with haſtier feet,
Their charming Miſtreſſes to meet,
Than condeſcending JAMES does ſtrive
Safety to all, and eaſe to give.
Thus his renown he does advance,
But the fair model took from France.
He traces LEWIS, whoſe vaſt ſoul
Has made him fam'd from pole to pole:

[5] *See* Rabelais, *Book* iii. *Chap.* 39.
[6] *King James* II.

Whoſe Conqueſts and exploits divine,
Will in all future Annals ſhine.
Let not my Muſe this Theme profane,
But to her ſheep return again.

Theſe *Sheep*, Madam, under favour, are your Highneſs and Madam MAZARIN. And here I have a proper opportunity to make her Panegyrick in order to join it with yours; but as theſe ſorts of parallels are dangerous things, I am of opinion, 'twill be much better to let it alone.

Like Siſters you love, and the ſovereign ſway
Between you divide, while your ſubjects obey:
But I'll no diſpute about preference raiſe,
Since nothing's ſo nice to be parted as praiſe.
Were TULLY now living, whoſe eloquent vein
Did the hearts of the people and Senators gain,
His Rhet'rick would fail in ſuch matters as theſe,
Two Heroes, two Wits, and two Beauties to pleaſe.

I am with a profound Reſpect, &c.

AN

ANSWER

BY

M. DE ST. EVREMOND,

TO THE

LETTER

Of Monſieur DE LA FONTAINE
To the Dutcheſs of BOUILLON.

IF you had been as ſenſibly touched with the merits of Madam DE BOUILLON, as we are charm'd by them, you had certainly accompanied her into England, where you would have found ſeveral Ladies that know you as well by your Works, as Madam DE LA SABLIERE knows you by your Converſation. They have not had the pleaſure of ſeeing you, which they ſo earneſtly deſired; but then they have had the ſatisfaction of reading your Letter, that has Gallantry and Wit enough to make even VOITURE himſelf jealous, were he now alive. Madam DE BOUILLON, Madam MAZARIN, and the Ambaſſador, were reſolved that

I ſhould make ſome ſort of an Anſwer to it. The attempt is difficult, however I will do my beſt to obey them.

Kings in religious ſilence I'll adore,
How can the Muſe increaſe their ſtore?
And in thoſe living images of Jove,
What can ſhe elſe but laughter move?
To think that we a Monarch raiſe
By ſtale hyperbole's, and borrow'd praiſe;
'Tis to depreſs the ſacred Theme,
'Tis not to praiſe, but to blaſpheme.
Their laws I'll chearfully obey,
And to their wills ſubmiſſion pay;
But more than this, what need I ſay?
Their early fame, without my toil,
Has paſs'd the Ganges, and the Nile:
And viſited dull barb'rous climes,
Unknown to Poetry and rhimes:
Deaf to the trifles we rehearſe,
They ſcorn the tribute of our Verſe.

Madam DE BOUILLON may be very well without my proſe, after ſhe has read the handſome Panegyrick which you ſent her. However, I cannot forbear to ſay, that there are inimitable graces in every thing ſhe does, and in every thing ſhe ſays; that ſhe is no leſs happy in her acquired, than natural endowments; and that her knowledge is equal to her other charms. In her ordinary Converſation, ſhe always diſputes with wit; and often (to my ſhame I own it) with reaſon; but a reaſon ſo lively, that indifferent judges take it for paſſion, and even the niceſt would be hardly able to di-

ſtinguiſh

ſtinguiſh it from anger in any perſon leſs amiable than her ſelf.

I will paſs over in ſilence the chapter of Madam MAZARIN, like that of the Kings, and content my ſelf to adore her in ſecret. Endeavour, Sir, for all you are ſo great a Poet, to form the brighteſt idea of Beauty to your ſelf, and in ſpite of the utmoſt efforts of your wit, you will be aſhamed of the dulneſs of your imagination, when you behold a perſon ſo admirable.

Give o'er ye Sons of art give o'er,
The radiant ſubject proſecute no more,
The moſt exalted things you teach,
Cannot her leaſt perfections reach.
Tall metaphors in vain you chuſe,
In vain the gaudieſt figures uſe:
You only flatter Titan's ray,
When you compare it to her brighter day.

Oh! beauteous HELEN, Sparta's pride!
Quit not old Lethe's peaceful ſide,
Where your majeſtick ſhade does reign:
'Twou'd but, alas! increaſe your pain,
If you the bright HORTENSIA ſaw,
To all mankind preſcribing law.

Should Heaven your former Charms reſtore,
And ſend you to the world once more,
You'd curſe the Sun, and hate the light,
That brought HORTENSIA to your ſight.

In antient night's dark Realms below,
Where the dull ſtreams forget to flow,

You may beguile the lazy hours,
With Fights, Adventures, and Amours;
And how great HECTOR fought may tell,
And how the dire ACHILLES fell.
Thoſe old Romantick Tales of Troy
May give diverſion, tho they give no joy.

But what ſtrange tempeſts in your ſoul muſt riſe,
To ſee HORTENSIA bear the prize!
To ſee her glitt'ring on the plain,
Command the heart of every ſwain!
While you poſſeſs'd by black deſpair,
To rev'rend HOMER muſt repair,
And ſome Dutch Author's works turn o'er,
To find thoſe Graces that are now no more.

Oh beauteous HELEN! Sparta's pride!
Quit not old Lethe's peaceful ſide.
Content near peaceful Lethe dwell,
Content with Empire, tho in Hell.

And ye fam'd Beauties of the Seine,
Who in HORTENSIA's abſence reign,
Join to prevent her coming home:
Whene'er ſhe touches Gallia's ſhore,
Your ſwains will viſit you no more,
But to her fairer Altar come.

"What means this rambling ſtuff, you cry,
"HELEN and *Lethe*, *Greece*, and *Troy*,
"This frequent ſhifting of the ſcene,
"Of Earth and Hell, what does it mean?

Oh

Oh FONTAINE! if HORTENSIA's praiſe
you'll ſing,
The boldeſt fable with you bring:
Low common truths her charms impair;
From vulgar incenſe ſhe will fly:
For godlike Heroes, and the godlike Fair,
Fiction it ſelf can't ſoar too high.

The ſolidity of my Lord Ambaſſador, has made him very indifferent to all praiſes: but whatever rigour he ſhews to his own merit; however ſevere he is to himſelf, he cannot but be ſecretly pleaſed with what you have writ in his favour. I could wiſh my Letter would be ſo happy as to have the ſame ſucceſs with you.

All the true wiſdom you poſſeſs,
That helps to make life's burden leſs:
Join'd with the ſolid force of age,
The fire of youth, but not its rage.

Having mention'd your Wit, I am obliged to ſay ſomething of your Morals.

With chearful ſteps to follow fate,
And ſcorn the tinſel ſplendour of the great;
That painted meteor to deſpiſe,
Which only ſots call Wit, and coxcombs prize;
In Verſe and Muſick, Wine and Play,
To paſs an inoffenſive life away;
Makes you Death's bitter draught defy;
By living thus, you learn with eaſe to die.

Mr. WALLER, whoſe loſs we ſo much regret, preſerv'd the flame and vigour of his wit to the eighty ſecond year of his age[†].

While gloomy damps my ſoul oppreſs'd,
With ſcarce a glimpſe of comfort bleſs'd,
Thus to my ſelf I ſighing cry'd:
With WALLER every Muſe had dy'd,
Had not FONTAINE his room ſupply'd.

Oh ſecond ORPHEUS! whoſe prevailing art
Can ſoften PLUTO's iron heart,
Now all the charms of harmony employ,
Now all your lyrick forces try,
And from thoſe dreary manſions WALLER call
Whither reſiſtleſs fate will ſend us all.

But we are allowed to aſk theſe ſorts of conſolations no where but in Poetry: we know to our grief, that no merit whatever can exempt men from the fatal neceſſity of dying; and that no charm, no prayer, no ſorrow, has efficacy enough to reſtore them to the world, when once they are gone out of it.

Cou'd Virtue its poſſeſſors ſave,
Or Wit exempt us from the grave,
WALLER wou'd ſtill enjoy the light,
And bleſs Britannia with his ſight:
WALLER, in whom PETRONIUS liv'd again,
The niceſt judge of Pleaſure and of Men.

[†] *Mr. Waller died the 21ſt of October 1687. He was born the 3d of March 1605.*

I paſs now from my regrets for Mr. WALLER's Muſe, to my good wiſhes for yours.

Long may your Muſe, enjoying happy eaſe,
The wond'ring world inſtruct and pleaſe:
May ſhe ſee many rolling years,
Freſh as the laurel wreath ſhe wears.

But 'tis not reaſonable that I ſhould make ſo many vows for others, without putting up a ſhort petition for my ſelf.

Since Beauty's Quéen does not diſdain
The ſervice of my ſlender vein,
Let my ſubmiſſion to her will,
The place of other merits fill.
Let her bright eyes that have ſo long
Preſerv'd my life, inſpire my ſong.
If ſhe'll vouchſafe on me to ſhine,
Good night APOLLO and the Nine.

M. DE LA FONTAINE'S ANSWER TO M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

THO all the Muſes ſhou'd combine,
And EVREMOND thoſe ſiſters join;
They cou'd not with their ſofteſt ſtrains
Or eaſe my grief, or charm my pains.
A Rheumatiſm, the Devil's invention,
Nurſt up in hell with dire intention,
Does jade my Body, cramp my Soul,
And all its faculties controul.
No intervals of pain I know,
No flattering thoughts deceive my woe.
Sleep I invoke with mournful cries,
But ſleep my wearied eye-lids flies.

Two Nymphs of different charms poſſeſt,
With gay ideas fill your breaſt.
HORTENSIA chiefly does infuſe,
New life and vigour in your Muſe.
Had Nature nothing for you done,
HORTENSIA wou'd ſuffice alone.

While

While you the pleaſing game purſue,
To Verſes I muſt bid adieu,
Till the kind Spring, with cowſlips crown'd,
Unthaws my fancy and the ground.

This it is, Sir, that has hinder'd me from returning you my thanks ſo ſoon as I ought to have done, for the honour you did me in writing to me. The leſs I deſerv'd ſo obliging a Letter, the more ſenſible I ought to be of the favour. You commend me for my Poetry and my Morals, and that with ſo good a grace, that Morals greatly ſuffer by it, that is to ſay, Modeſty.

Not India with its rich perfumes,
Its ſpicy ſtores, and boaſted gums
That Prieſts in ſacred temples uſe,
Equals the incenſe of your Muſe.
Who, without pride and pleaſure too,
Can hear the praiſe that comes from you,
To whom the ready world ſubmit,
Standard of Authors, judge of Wit!
If any taſte my genius ſhews,
To your nice rule that taſte it owes.
I mean in part; for VOITURE's eaſe,
Did next inſtruct me how to pleaſe:
MAROT too, juſtly claims a ſhare:
You three my honoured Maſters are.

I forgot my Maſter FRANCIS, whoſe Diſciple I ſtill profeſs my ſelf, as likewiſe Maſter VINCENT's and Maſter CLEMENT's [1]. I think here are Maſters enough in all conſcience for a Scholar of my

[1] *Francis Rabelais, Vincent Voiture, and Clement Marot.*

my age. As I have no extraordinary talent at Raillery, wherein you excel, I'll come and learn leſſons of you on the banks of Hippocrene, (provided, Sir, we have plenty of bottles there a cooling). We will be ſurrounded with Nymphs, and the young Sons of Parnaſſus, who ſhall ſet down in their Table-books the leaſt things you ſay. I ſee them from hence, learning in your ſchool to judge of every thing with niceneſs and penetration.

The men of niceſt taſte, and juſteſt wit,
To your tribunal readily ſubmit;
But I'll your merits ſilently admire,
As you HORTENSIA's happy charms and fire.

At the very ſame place, where you tell me that you will pay a ſecret adoration to theſe three Powers, Madam MAZARIN, and the two Kings; you make me her Portraicture, by telling me 'tis impoſſible to do it, and by giving me leave to repreſent to my imagination all the Beauties and Graces I can think of. If I were ſo raſh as to attempt it, you defy, in her name, both Truth and Fable, and all the moſt agreeable ideas we can form in our minds. I ſhould make my court but ill to you, ſhould I ſuffer my ſelf to be beaten back and awed by ſuch difficulties. We ought to repreſent your Heroine to you as well as we are able. This enterprize is ſomewhat too large for one of my narrow genius to undertake, and wou'd be much fitter for you than my ſelf, whom the world has hitherto believed to be able to draw nothing but Animals[a]. However, in order to pleaſe you, and to make this Portraicture come up to the life as near as I can, I have run over

[a] *Monſieur de la Fontaine hath admirably well tranſlated* Eſop's Fables *into French Verſe.*

over the Country of the Muſes, but cou'd find nothing in effect, but old expreſſions among them, which you ſay the world deſpiſes. From thence I travell'd to the Land of the Graces, where I fell into the ſame inconvenience. Jeſts and ſmiles are a ſort of Gallantry more threadbare than the other, and you are much better acquainted with them than I. Thus, the beſt I can do, is only to ſay, that in your Heroine nothing is wanting of that which pleaſes, and of that which pleaſes too much.

To bright HORTENSIA, Fate's indulgent care
Has given a free, but winning Air:
The force of Wit, and blooming Beauty's pride,
With thouſand nameleſs Charms beſide:
Where'er the buſy ſun enlightens day,
HORTENSIA's eyes have ſov'reign ſway.

Oh EVREMOND! chief leader of the train,
That fair HORTENSIA's crown maintain,
In laſting Numbers, and harmonious Lays
Begin to celebrate her praiſe.
Why ſhould I PHOEBUS, or the Muſes name?
You'll do more juſtice to her fame.

What will you ſay now to a deſign that is juſt come into my head? Since you wiſh that the Glory of Madam MAZARIN fill'd all the univerſe, and I for my part deſire that the Fame of Madam DE BOUILLON might yet go farther, let neither of us ſleep till we have put ſo fine an enterprize in execution. Let us make our ſelves *Knights of the round Table*; and it happens well enough that this ſort of Chivalry began firſt in England. We will have two magnificent Tents erected at our own charges

ges, and above these two tents, the Portraictures of the two Divinities whom we adore.

At the foot of some bridge, or the side of a wood,
The Heralds shall publish this Challenge aloud:

Great MARIANA *and* HORTENSIA *see,*
She without equal, without second she,
Born high above their sex, unrivall'd stand,
And all the hearts of all the world demand.

If your opinion finds belief,
HORTENSIA will be reckon'd chief:
But MARIANA'll turn the scale,
If my small interest can prevail.
This is agreed on either hand,
One of the two must every heart command.

But what, if to prevent all jars,
And ill effects of civil wars,
We choose a mediator straight,
To reconcile this grand debate?
He that between two Kings did matters clear
Will sure be thought a proper umpire here[3].

We will stay till the return of the Spring, and that of my Health; otherwise I shall be forc'd to seek out strange Adventures in a litter. People will call me *the Knight of the Rheumatism*; a name, which, as I take it, doth not so well suit with a Knight Errant. Heretofore, when all seasons of the year were alike to me, I wou'd have embarqu'd without any more ado. But now the case is alter'd:

CUPID

[3] *The French Ambassador.*

CUPID, who as the ſtory goes,
Once prick'd his fingers with a roſe,
In a ſad tone, and doleful ſtrain,
Did of the puny ſmart complain.
How wou'd his little Godſhip ſwear,
Did he my murd'ring torments bear?
Ev'n Love, with all its boaſted pain,
Is nothing to what I ſuſtain.

We have ſuffer'd a mighty loſs in the Death of Mr. WALLER: he ſhould have made one of our company, had he been living. Perhaps I ought not to have introduced him into a Letter, ſo little ſerious as this is: however, I think my ſelf obliged to give you an account of what has happen'd to him on the other ſide of the Lake of Oblivion. You will look upon this as a Dream, and perhaps 'tis no better: however, the whim is got into my head, and ſuch as it is, I leave it with you.

Between the Wits, the Lovers, and the Wiſe,
A warm diſpute did in Elyſium riſe.
Each ſide to WALLER did pretend,
Each ſide wou'd WALLER have their friend.

You well-bred Shades, great PLUTO ſaid,
I have your ſeveral reaſons weigh'd:
Four talents did in WALLER *ſhine,*
Wiſdom, and Eloquence divine,
And charming Verſe, and Love's ſoft flame:
Which of you then does WALLER *claim?*

Oh ſovereign PLUTO, Miniſter of Fate,
This caſe admits of no debate.

If

If theſe four gifts did WALLER grace,
Love ought to challenge the firſt place:
For Love, when once it has inſpir'd the breaſt,
Is the great art that teaches all the reſt.

To return now to what you tell me of my Morals, I am very glad that you have ſo good an opinion of 'em. I am no leſs an enemy than you to that falſe Wit upon which our Libertines value themſelves. Whoever affects it, I ſhall make no ſcruple to yield him the better in ridicule.

Since my day's ſpent ſo near the night,
Why ſhould I beat my brains to write?
'Tis better far with buſy look
To view the world's amazing book:
And Nature's myſtick ſprings to know,
And the vaſt mind that all controuls below.

When this is done, what ſhou'd deny
To take our fill of harmleſs joy?
Joy we may taſte a thouſand ways,
And ſtill find ſomething new to pleaſe.
Whether by ſome cool river's ſide
We ſee the wanton waters glide,
The fiſhes ſport, and ſun-beams gay
On the ſmooth liquid ſurface play.
Or ſeek ſome lonely Sylvan ſhade,
Or glimm'ring bower, or ruſſet glade,
Where the dark horrors of the wood
Solemn thoughts inſpire, and good.
Sometimes at table when we dine,
We may diſſolve our cares in Wine,

And o'er the generous Nectar ſport,
And laugh at City and at Court.
And ſometimes too a new Amour,
May ſerve to paſs an idle hour:
Long with the Fair we muſt not ſtay,
But from the charmer part away.
Love does unſeen the flame impart,
And finds an eaſy paſſage to the heart.

But is't not, worthy friend, high time
To chaſe the CELIA's from my rhime,
When the grave City is preparing,
To give our Damſels Indian airing [4]?
Oh that that my perſecuting pain,
Wou'd with theſe Laſſes croſs the main.

Cruel diſeaſe! old Saturn's ſon,
Quit this abode, and get thee gone:
Some lazy Prelate's limbs invade,
Or Lawyer batt'ning on his trade.
Or with thy dire attendants wait,
On ſome dull Miniſter of State.
But why, thy viſits never timing,
Should'ſt thou intrude to ſpoil my rhiming?
The devil a Verſe can from me creep,
But ſhews what company I keep.

If this be thy felonious aim,
To chill my Muſe, and damp her flame,

[4] *At the time when Monſieur de la Fontaine writ this Letter, they took up, at Paris, as many Women of pleaſure as they could find out, in order to ſend them to the French Colonies in the Weſt-Indies.*

Prithee to ſome new hoſt repair,
And all this needleſs trouble ſpare.
In few months more, without thy aid,
Old age will ſpoil me for that trade.

Madam DE LA SABLIERE thinks her ſelf extremely honoured, that you have been pleas'd to remember her, and deſires me to thank you for it. I hope that this will ſupply the place of a recommendation with you, and more readily obtain me the honour of your friendſhip. I requeſt and beg you, Sir, to believe that no man in the world is more ſincerely yours, than I, who am, Your, *&c.*

Paris, December
18. 1687.

A

JUDGMENT

ON THE THREE

ACCOUNTS OF SIAM,

AND ON

CONFUCIUS'S BOOK.

TO

M. LE FEVRE, M.D.

I Have carefully read the three *Accounts of Siam*, which you ſent me; and my opinion of the Authors is as follows.

The Chevalier DE CHAUMONT[1] gives us but a lame account of the Nations he ſaw: for, being ſo taken up with his own Character, he could neither ſatisfy his own curioſity in travelling, nor anſwer our expectations at his return. But whoever aſpires at the honour of an Embaſſy, cannot have a better maſter than him, for learning the ſtate and

[1] Relation de l'Ambaſſade de M. de Chaumont à la Cour du Roi de Siam, *&c. printed in the year* 1686.

nicety that are to be obſerv'd in the minuteſt circumſtances.

Father TACHARD[2] has the accompliſhments of a Miſſionary for all ſorts of Religions; is as capable of planting the faith of the Eaſtern people in Europe, as that of the Europeans in the Eaſt; as fit to make Talapoins at Paris, as Jeſuits at Siam.

The Abbé DE CHOISI[3] tires me much with his Journal of Winds and Courſes; but the Letters wherein he ſpeaks of himſelf divert me. I am overjoy'd to find him take Orders, that ſo he might be employ'd in ſaying of Maſs; he being otherwiſe unſerviceable on ſhipboard. He writes naturally; and to do him juſtice, no traveller is leſs fond of the *faux merveilleux*, or of pretended wonders, than he. He is not diſpleas'd to ſhew himſelf upon a great Elephant, or to appear before the King with the Embaſſador and the Biſhop, nor to confer with Mr. CONSTANCE in private: but yet for all that, he does not think the Symphony of that Country the leſs deteſtable; nor is he a whit better pleas'd with the Chineſe Comedy, or the Siameſe Opera; nor does he like their Painting better than their Muſick. As to their refreſhments and entertainments, they conſiſt of Hens, Ducks, Hogs, and Rice without end; a very afflicting thing to Monſieur the Abbé's Gout, notwithſtanding the mortification to which his new ſtate of life ties him down.

Tonquin and Cochinchina are but very inconſiderable: thoſe Kingdoms ſtand in need to be embelliſh'd by imaginations that are in love with foreign wonders. I paſs'd from thoſe *Accounts* to CONFUCIUS'S

[2] Voyage de Siam des Peres Jeſuites envoyez par le Roi aux Indes & à la Chine, *&c. publiſh'd in* 1686.

[3] Journal du Voyage de Siam; *printed in* 1686.

CIUS's Book [4], who is the moſt tireſome Moraliſt I ever read. His ſentences are below PIBRAC's *Quatrains*, where he is intelligible; and above the *Apocalypſe*, where he is obſcure.

A

LETTER

TO

MONSIEUR JUSTEL.

ALtho you have made a reſolution never to buy any Books, yet I adviſe you to purchaſe that of OROBIO a famous Jew, and Mr. LIMBORCH a learned Chriſtian [1]. Nothing ever appear'd on that ſubject ſtronger, more ingenious, or more profound. M. GAUMIN [2] would have ſaid of LIMBORCH,

Si Pergama dextrâ
Defendi poſſent, etiam hæc defenſa fuiſſent.

and I will ſay of OROBIO,

[4] Confucius Sinarum Philoſophus, five ſcientia Sinica expoſita, *&c. publiſh'd by Father Couplet in* 1687.

[1] *The title of this Book is,* De Veritate Chriſtianæ Religionis amicâ collatio cum erudito Judæo. *See the* Bibliotheque Univerſelle, *Tom.* VII. *pag.* 289.

[2] *See my Remarks on the* Colomeſiana.

ſhelves and rocks; but ſtill with a view to the paſſage which his friend had to make.

The modern Genius, which a nature leſs exalted hath left in a dependance upon order and reaſon; this Genius, I ſay, would never have had the boldneſs to raiſe it ſelf at one daſh, to the Creation of the world, and the ſeparation of the Land from the water. And indeed, there is no neceſſity of going to the Indies to be drowned; and ſixty leagues of ſea would have been ſufficient to awaken MALHERBE againſt the inventor of Navigation.

I talk to you, like a man who has only low and common views: but as for you, Sir, who are perfectly well acquainted with HORACE[2]; you may believe that his enthuſiaſms gave him a right to quit *the half of his ſoul*[3] ſo ſuddenly, and to paſs from the tenderneſs of his Love to the miracle of a ſecond *Geneſis*. But to ſpeak ſeriouſly, if any thing makes me allow of your opinion, it is, that he who aſcends to the *war of the Giants*, has but a ſtep farther to go, before he arrives at the *Creation of the World*.

All things conſidered, I am miſtaken if both opinions may not be defended: that of Monſieur BARILLON, which is the more natural of the two, flows from good ſenſe, which judges of things as they are in themſelves; and yours perhaps agrees well enough to HORACE's taſte, who is apt enough to go from his ſubject. The beauty of his genius gives him a privilege of advancing happy boldneſſes, and noble extravagancies, which our imagination, ſtraitened by a ſcruple of juſtneſs, will not allow. But whatever meaning we are pleaſed to put upon HORACE's words, his *Ode* is

[2] *Monſieur de la Baſtide had tranſlated into French ſome Odes of Horace, and among the reſt, that which is here mention'd.*

[3] *Horace calls Virgil,* animæ dimidium meæ.

is equally beautiful and extraordinay: I am of opinion, that no Poet ever had ſo tender a heart, and ſo free a mind at the ſame time.

A

LETTER

TO MONSIEUR ***.

In the name of the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

I Am not conſiderable enough in the world, to think I am obliged to give it an account of my Affairs; but I am grateful enough for the part you take in my concerns, to ſatisfy your curioſity as to my preſent Circumſtances. All that I fear, is, leſt the length of my Letter may give you too much trouble; for I cannot pretend to give you an account of my preſent, without reminding you of my paſt condition in many inſtances. I ſhall, out of modeſty, forbear to ſay any thing of the advantages which I had'; and ſhall, out of diſcretion, abſtain from mentioning the qualities of Monſieur MAZARIN: but leaving the publick to make a judgment of our perſons, I ſhall be bold to ſay, that I did not in the leaſt contribute towards the ſquandering away of the Eſtate I brought him; and that the loweſt of his domeſticks enrich'd themſelves

ſelves out of it, at the ſame time that he denied me the mere neceſſaries of life.

I liv'd more than I ought to have done, and as long as I could, with a Huſband that was ſo contrary to my temper: at laſt I diſengag'd my ſelf out of Reaſon, from a man with whom I ſuffer'd my ſelf to be joined out of Obedience. So juſt a diſengagement coſt me thoſe riches which have made ſo much noiſe in the world: but liberty can never be too dear bought, by one who delivers himſelf from tyranny. However that be, I found my ſelf diveſted of every thing: I found my ſelf without any means of ſubſiſting, till ſuch time as the King, out of a principle of juſtice, was pleas'd to give me a Penſion, without Monſieur MAZARIN's conſent, which Monſieur MAZARIN took from me ten years ago, with his Majeſty's conſent. This change of the King's favour, muſt not be imputed to the change of my conduct; for I never was guilty of any thing that could diſpleaſe him. But it is hard for the greateſt of Kings to diſtinguiſh well betwixt the impoſture of bad offices, and thoſe truths which they have need to be informed of. Reaſon would do too much violence to our inclination and humour, if we were always to diſtruſt thoſe whom we love, or who pleaſe us; and naturally we don't lay our ſelves under the reſtraint of thoſe precautions againſt agreeable perſons, for the ſake of indifferent perſons, whom we don't converſe withal. For this reaſon, I am not ſurprized that I have been believed to be ſuch an one as I have been painted: the King would have done me the juſtice to augment the Penſion that has been taken from me, if I had been ſo happy as to have been known to him ſuch as I really am.

In the mean while, notwithſtanding this retrenchment, and the Debts which have followed upon it, I have continu'd to live honourably by the favours and

and benefits of the Kings of England: but on this extraordinary Revolution, which will be the wonder of all ages, I found my ſelf forſaken; reduc'd to the neceſſity of ſeeking help only from my ſelf, where I found none; expos'd to the fury of the mob; having no correſpondence but with people who were as much amazed as my ſelf, and endeavour'd to hearten one another; or with unfortunate people, who were fitter to mourn together, than to comfort one another. After ſo many troubles, Tranquillity was again reſtor'd; but the ceaſing of the troubles ſet my mind more at eaſe, only the better to ſhew me the ſad ſtate of my Affairs. I have now nothing of my own, no aſſiſtance where I am, no hopes of any elſewhere; receiving nothing but Compliments inſtead of Aſſiſtance from the few friends I have with you, and reproaches from all others, for having liv'd in a place, from whence I do not know how to depart, and finding my ſelf yet more at a loſs where I can go.

Till now, faults have been condemned, and miſfortunes lamented: but I make all things change their nature, miſery, that melancholy work of my fortune brings me enemies, excites the bitterneſs and wrath of thoſe who ought to be moſt favourable to me. I don't exaggerate the unhappineſs of my condition, which I am the more ſenſible of, becauſe I meet with Reproaches, when I expected Conſolations. You have more reaſon, Sir, than to approve ſo unjuſt a behaviour; and you have conſtancy enough in friendſhip, ſtill to continue yours towards me. If it cannot ſuccour me as much as you could wiſh, yet it is as ſincere as I could deſire it to be. My ſtars beget good-will towards me, where there is no power, and oppoſition where there is: but, in fine, the malignity of the influence is not compleat, ſince amidſt all the

misfor-

misfortunes it cauſes, it ſtill leaves me ſome Friends, who uſe their utmoſt endeavours to give me conſolation.

A

LETTER

TO MONSIEUR ***.

In the name of the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

I Don't wonder that Monſieur MAZARIN gives out that I only was to blame for my not returning to France; but I ſhould wonder very much if people of ſenſe ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be cheated with his artifices, and could be won over by his lyes. As we never agreed in any one thing, ſo I ſhall take a courſe quite contrary to his, by telling nothing but truth. 'Tis ten years ſince Monſieur MAZARIN took from me a Penſion of twenty four thouſand Livres, which were given me for my ſubſiſtence: this retrenchment brought on me conſiderable debts, which hinder'd my departure out of England, where I was teaz'd by my Creditors, but not perſecuted to that degree I have been ſince.

All things are changed. The Revolution has happened; I found my ſelf without relief, without any means of paying my old debts, and very happy to be

be able to contract new ones for my ſubſiſtence. Not a day went over my head, but I was threatned to be thrown in priſon: I was not ſafe even in privileg'd places; and when I went from my Lodgings, I was not ſure of returning to them. Being reduc'd to this hard neceſſity, ſome of my Friends, and even ſome Merchants, oblig'd themſelves for part of my debts to thoſe tyrants, and were ſoon forc'd to pay them. But by this means I only chang'd my Creditors; for theſe new ones take as great precaution how to be paid, as others would have done. However, I am oblig'd to them for the ſmall liberty I enjoy; and for the ſubſiſtence which I have hitherto found, which I find every day more hard to get.

This is the true ſtate of my paſt Circumſtances, and the real condition of my preſent; certainly it cannot be worſe. I deſerve to be aſſiſted by my friends, and pitied by indifferent perſons. A fuller detail of my Affairs, would be troubleſome to others, and uſeleſs to my ſelf; and therefore I ſhall ſay no more.

A

LETTER

TO MONSIEUR ***.

In the name of the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

NO body can have a deeper ſenſe than I have of the declaration of your Friendſhip to me; but allow me, Sir, to complain of the injuſtice of thoſe conjectures which are made of my intention. If I had been in a condition to depart, and yet had ſtaid after this, ſomething might have been objected; but People will needs have me to return to France, and yet leave me at an impoſſibility of going out of England. There is not a greater truth in the whole world than what I tell you. I have wrote a Letter to the Dutcheſs of NEVERS, which is ſomewhat longer than this, wherein I declar'd my mind more at large. I beg of you, Sir, to believe me truly ſincere, particularly when I proteſt that I ſhall maintain my friendſhip for you all the days of my life.

A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF NEVERS.

In the name of the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

I Never doubted, Madam, of your having all the concern that any one could have for my intereſts: I expected from your friendſhip all that you could expect from mine. It is not neceſſary to give one another new aſſurances thereof in our Letters, ſince we can firmly depend upon one another in every thing that regards us. I thought that nothing in Monſieur MAZARIN's conduct ought to ſurprize me; and yet I cannot help wondering, that after having taken my Penſion from me, for theſe ten or twelve years; reduc'd me to the neceſſity of begging my ſubſiſtence, as I do; endeavoured to deprive me of my Rights, not ſatisfied to ſee me in want during his life, unleſs he could be ſure I ſhould be miſerable after his death: after ſo handſom a proceeding, ſo obliging a conduct, and ſo generous actions, I cannot but wonder, I ſay, that he ſhould be ſo kind as to deſire I ſhould come and live with him. But firſt of all, my Debts muſt be paid, my ſubſiſtence ſecured, and I ſet at liberty to go out of England. This I expect from

the juſtice of the Gentlemen of the Great Council; and from yours, Madam, that you will believe me to be, as I really am, *&c.*

A

LETTER

TO MONSIEUR ***.

In the name of the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

I Always believed that which you were ſo kind as to write to me about my Affairs, and am overjoy'd that my ſentiments agree with yours. Monſieur MAZARIN did never ſincerely intend to ſee me again. He had a mind, as you ſay very well, to deprive me of my Rights, and after having made me unhappy during his life, like a good Chriſtian, to put it out of all doubt, that I ſhould be miſerable after his death. This, Sir, is the holy joy which he intended to give me. I conjure you to continue your cares and aſſiſtance towards me, in the courſe of an Affair, which, in all likelihood, will not have a ſpeedy iſſue. In ſpite of Monſieur MAZARIN's application, who expects the ſucceſs of his perſecutions not ſo much from Providence as from his own induſtry, I don't believe the Gentlemen of the Great Council will deprive me of my Rights; but if Monſieur MAZARIN

RIN is not obliged to pay my Debts, how ſhall I come off with my Creditors, and whence can I expect the means of ſubſiſting, till ſuch time as they are ſatisfied? The Merchants have given me credit, and people of Condition have obliged me with money; but they will not loſe their money. What ſhall I do? I do what Monſieur MAZARIN ſays, but practiſes not; and that is, commit my ſelf entirely to Providence. To this I ſhall add the care and concern of my Relations and Friends, and particularly yours, Sir, which lay an obligation upon me which I ſhall never forget.

A

JUDGMENT

UPON SOME

FRENCH AUTHORS.

To the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

ACcording to your deſire, Madam, I here offer you my thoughts on ſome of our Authors.

MALHERBE has always been reckoned the moſt excellent of our Poets; but more for his turn and expreſſion, than for his invention and thoughts.

We cannot deny VOITURE the firſt rank in every thing relating to Ingenuity and Gallantry: 'tis enough for SARRASIN to have the ſecond

place, to be on a level with the moſt eſteemed of the Antients in that kind.

BENSERADE has ſo particular a character, and ſo agreeable a manner of ſaying things, that the niceſt Criticks can bear with his Points and Alluſions.

In Tragedy, CORNEILLE admits of no equal, RACINE of no ſuperior; the diverſity of Characters allowing a concurrence, if it cannot eſtabliſh an equality. CORNEILLE is admired for the expreſſion of an heroick Grandeur of Soul, for the force of the Paſſions, and ſublimity of Diſcourſe: RACINE's merit conſiſts in Sentiments which are more natural, in Thoughts that are more clear, and in a Diction that is more pure, and more eaſy. The former raviſhes the ſoul, the latter makes a conqueſt of the mind: the latter gives no room for the reader to cenſure, the former does not leave the ſpectator in a condition to examine. In the conduct of the Work, RACINE more circumſpect, or diſtruſting himſelf, ſticks cloſe to the Greeks, whom he is a perfect maſter of; CORNEILLE, improving the advantages which time affords, finds out beauties which ARISTOTLE knew nothing of.

MOLIERE has taken the Antients for his model; and would be inimitable to thoſe whom he imitates, if they were yet alive.

There is no Author who has done greater honour to our age than DESPREAUX; to make a larger panegyrick upon him, would be to aſſume the province of his Works, which make it themſelves.

LA FONTAINE embelliſhes the *Fables* of the Antients: the Antients would have ſpoiled LA FONTAINE's *Tales*.

PERRAULT has found out the defects of the Antients, better than he has made out the advantage of the Moderns. To take it altogether, his

Book

Book [1] ſeems to me to be very good, curious, uſeful, and capable of curing us of abundance of errors. I could wiſh the *Chevalier* had told fewer ſtories, that the *Preſident* had enlarg'd his reaſons a little more, and the *Abbé* confin'd his within a narrower compaſs.

You would have me ſpeak of my ſelf, Madam; but I ſhall ſpeak to you of your ſelf. If any of thoſe Gentlemen had been in my place, had the benefit of ſeeing you every day, and receiving the bright hints which you inſpire, he had ſurpaſs'd both the Antients and Moderns. But I have improv'd this advantage ſo little, that I don't deſerve a place amongſt thoſe illuſtrious perſons.

A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I Hope you will be ſo good as to excuſe me, Madam, if I do not perfectly give into the generous frankneſs of your ſentiments, which is oppoſite to the natural circumſpection of my Countrymen, who are enemies to truths that are clear, and boldly declar'd. My Reaſons againſt a full declaration of your intentions, are theſe:

[1] Parallele des Anciens & des Modernes.

I am perſuaded that all your Acquaintance (for your Friends have not yet ſhewn themſelves) deſire nothing more than to have a pretence to cry out againſt your humour and your conduct, tho the one be very agreeable, and the other very blameleſs. Never give them any handle to wreak themſelves upon you: tie them down, whether they will or no, at leaſt to a decent ſhew of Friendſhip which they ought to have for you, with more warmth than they have. Always aſk money; and if none comes, 'tis you who will have cauſe to complain: if you can get it, I engage to furniſh you with ten or twelve Reaſons for not leaving England, each of which will be better than another. In fine, give no body any cauſe or pretext of abandoning you, and be convinced that a too open declaration of your intentions would be very prejudicial to you there, and would not be of any uſe to you here. I have heard you ſay, Madam, that the Counteſs of SOISSONS never *gave people any opportunity of finding out her ſecrets:* don't diſcover your ſentiments your ſelf. If you are reſolved to proceed with leſs precaution, the *Normand* quits his, and is ready to enter into your ſentiments.

A

LETTER

FROM

MADAM DE L'ENCLOS,

TO

M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

MOnſieur DE CHARLEVAL is juſt dead [1]; at which I am ſo much afflicted, that I endeavour to comfort my ſelf by conſidering the ſhare you will have in my grief. I viſited him every day. His mind had all the charms of youth, and his heart had all the goodneſs and tenderneſs that could be deſired in a true Friend. We often ſpoke of you, and of all the original wits of our time. His life, and that which I lead at preſent, had a great deal of reſemblance. In fine, ſuch a loſs is worſe than death it ſelf. Pray let me hear from you. I am as much concerned about your welfare at London, as if you were here: old friends have charms, which are never ſo well known as when we are depriv'd of them.

[1] *Monſieur de Charleval died on the eighth day of March* 1693, *in the ſeventy third year of his age.*

A

LETTER

From the ſame:

TO

M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

I Was all alone in my Chamber, and very weary with reading, when one came and told me, *There is a Gentleman who comes from Monſieur* DE ST. EVREMOND. Judge you if all my wearineſs was not ſhaken off that moment. I had the pleaſure of talking of you, and was thereby informed of particulars which Letters cannot expreſs, *viz.* your perfect health, and your occupations. The joy of the mind ſhews the force of it; and your Letters perſuade me, that England promiſes you forty years more of life: for I think that it is in England only that they talk of People who have liv'd beyond the age of man. I could have wiſh'd to have paſs'd the remainder of my life with you; had you thought the ſame way that I do, you would be in this Country now. However, it is very agreeable to remember thoſe perſons whom we have loved; and perhaps this ſeparation of our bodies, has been made on purpoſe to embelliſh my Epitaph. I could have wiſh'd the young Divine

Divine [1] had found me in the glory of *Niquée* [2], where people never ſuffer any change; for I believe you think me one of the firſt perſons enchanted in it. Don't change your ideas in this matter, which have always been favourable to me; and let this communication, which ſome Philoſophers think better than preſence, endure always.

I told Monſieur TURRETIN how glad I ſhould be if I could do him any ſervice: he has met with ſome of my friends here, who have thought him worthy of the praiſes you have given him. If he has a mind to converſe with the honeſt Abbots, who remain here in the abſence of the Court, he ſhall be treated as a man whom you eſteem. I read your Letter before him with Spectacles; but they do not ill become me for I had always a grave mein. If he is in love with that *Merit*, which is call'd here *diſtinguiſhed*, perhaps your wiſh may be accompliſhed; for people endeavour to comfort me every day for my loſſes, by this fine word. I underſtood that you wiſh'd LA FONTAINE in England: we have but little of his company at Paris; his head is very much weakened. This is the fate of Poets: TASSO and LUCRETIUS felt it. I doubt no Love-powder has been laid for LA FONTAINE; for he did not much court Women who could be at the expence of it.

[1] *Monſieur Alphonſe Turretin, now Profeſſor of Divinity and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory in the Academy of Geneva.*

[2] *See the Romance of* Amadis de Gaule.

M. DE ST. EVREMOND'S ANSWER TO MADAM DE L'ENCLOS.

MOnſieur TURRETIN is extremely obliged to me for making him acquainted with you; and I am not a little obliged to him for giving occaſion to the fine Letter which I have juſt received. I don't queſtion but he found you with the ſame eyes that I beheld you formerly: thoſe eyes by which I always new the Conqueſt of a Lover, when they ſparkl'd a little more than ordinary, and which made us ſay,

CYTHEREA *ne'er was ſuch*, &c.[1]

You are ſtill the ſame to me; and tho nature, which never ſpar'd any body, ſhould have ſpent its utmoſt power to produce ſome alteration in the features of your face, yet my imagination will ſtill be for you, that *Glory* of *Niquée*, in which you know people underwent no change. I am very ſure, that as to your eyes and your teeth, you have no occaſion for it: what you ſtand moſt in need of, is my judgment, to underſtand thorowly the advantages of your wit, which improves every day. You are more witty than ever the young and ſprightly NINON[2] was.

A

[1] *An Ode of Malherbe.*
[2] *See pag.* 431.

A

BILLET

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

I Beg of you Madam, to tell the Dutcheſs of BOUILLON that no perſon can be more ſenſible than I am of the honour that ſhe does me by remembring me. I don't much pity LA FONTAINE's condition, fearing leſt my own may ſtand in need of pity. At his and my age, no body ought to wonder that we loſe our Reaſon, but that we keep it. The preſervation of it is no great advantage: 'tis an obſtacle to the quiet of old people; and a bar to the pleaſures of young perſons. LA FONTAINE feels not that diſorder which it gives, and perhaps he is the happier on that ſcore. It is not a misfortune to be a fooliſh, but to have ſo little time to be ſo[1].

A

[1] *Monſieur de La Fontaine died the* 13th *of March*, 1695.

A

LETTER

TO THE

DUTCHESS OF BOUILLON,

In the name of the Dutcheſs of MAZARIN.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I think I have explain'd my ſelf ſo often and ſo clearly, on the demand that has been made me to declare my Intentions, that there was no occaſion of requiring a new declaration. I proteſt to you then, my dear Siſter, that I have no deſign to eternize my ſelf in England; all my aim and wiſh is, to return to France to my family: but I declare to you, with the utmoſt ſincerity, that it were as impoſſible for me to depart hence without paying my Debts, as to fly. I am every day forced to contract new debts, when I expected to receive wherewithal to pay off my old ones. There are perhaps one or two perſons of quality among my Creditors, who would not hinder my departure; but the reſt would no more ſuffer my Bankruptcy than the Merchants. You may be ſure that I am more deſirous of being at liberty, than others can be grieved to ſee me in a kind of captivity in foreign Countries. Nothing but the want of means hinders me from going to ſpend the reſt of

of my days with thoſe perſons whom I love above all the reſt of the world. You are convinced, my dear Siſter, that my Brother and your ſelf are the chief of them. Theſe are my true and real Intentions: I don't diſguiſe them in the leaſt. 'Tis very true, I would rather chuſe Death, than return to Monſieur MAZARIN; and would as ſoon paſs the reſt of my life in a Nunnery as with him: in effect, theſe are two extremes which are both equally to be avoided. You will make ſuch uſe of my Letter as you ſhall think will be moſt for my advantage. Adieu, my dear Siſter; love me always, and continue your endeavours to ſerve that perſon in the world, who is moſt yours.

A BILLET TO THE DUTCHESS OF MAZARIN.

IF you have a mind to underſtand how neceſſary you are to the World, you may ſatisfy your curioſity in your ſhort abſence. There is a Spaniſh *Concetto* which I would apply to you, if I was not too much an enemy to a figurative Style. *When the Sun is under an eclipſe*, ſays the Author of the Concetto, *'tis to let the World know how difficult it is to be without its light.* Your eclipſe makes my Lords MONTAGUE, GODOLPHIN, ARRAN, and others, feel how hard it is to live without your light. I defy all the Spaniards and Italians together,

to

to carry a Figure farther. Every thing lowres at London ſince your departure. It is not ſo at Chelſea, where your Philoſophy makes you taſte a very delicious Retreat. Manage the grief of your friends by intervals of preſence:

Upon the wings of time grief flies away.

Show your ſelf from time to time, or at leaſt let your friends ſee you at Chelſea. TUYO *haſta la muerte.*

A

LETTER

To the ſame.

NO Letter had ever given me more pleaſure than yours, Madam, provided it had been written to any other but my ſelf. The thoughts in it are lively, and the applications happy: to my misfortune, all that wit is exercis'd at my expence. My *moſt humble and moſt obedient Servant*, ſhows an ingenious diſpleaſure, which puts your moſt humble and moſt obedient Servant in deſpair. I could have bore up under a ſudden and impetuous anger: my patience has often been tried with thoſe kind of movements; but an ingenious and meditated anger quite confounds me, and puts me to fruitleſs pain to gueſs the cauſe of it. I examine my ſelf, and the more I ſtudy to diſcover my fault, the more reaſons do I find to hope for your good graces. If PARMENIO is guilty of a ſlip, who can be truſted? If he be innocent, what can we do, what

what behaviour can ſhelter us? I will anſwer for it, Madam, PARMENIO is not faulty in the leaſt.

From PARMENIO one eaſily paſſes to the Generals: I do not blame thoſe who are alive; but I have hitherto praiſed none but the dead, and it already appears, that they were praiſe-worthy. The taking of Namur [1] would have excited me to ſome fine production; but ever ſince my Star has hid her ſelf, and I have been without her influences, my Talents are buried. Here is abundance of idle diſcourſe. If I yet ſaw one of your Letters ſigned DULCINEA, and I was allowed to ſign mine as formerly, *El Cavallero de la triſte figura*; what joy ſhould I be in!

Haſta la muerte cannot be forbid me; for it depends upon me to be always, as I ſhall certainly be, either the *Knight with the diſmal countenance*, or *Your moſt humble and moſt obedient Servant.*

TO THE SAME.

THE fine air of Chelſea, and the repoſe of ſolitude, leave no room to doubt, either of your health, or of the Tranquillity of your mind. This is the beginning of a Philoſopher's Letter, written to a greater Philoſopher than himſelf. He cannot maintain his Philoſophy any longer: the remembrance of your diſpleaſure againſt him has confounded him. He hopes nevertheleſs, that his innocence and your equity, will allow him to end with TUYO HASTA LA MUERTE, *El Cavallero de la triſte figura.*

I

[1] *Namur was taken by King William, on the* 23d *day of Auguſt* 1695.

I was told of a Sparrow, the King of all Sparrows: they ſay it whiſtles, is tamer than any that ever was ſeen, and that it plays a thouſand pretty tricks, which Sparrows are not wont to do. This great merit gave me a curioſity to ſee it. I found in it all that had been ſaid of it, except that rare quality of whiſtling, which was put off to another time, when it would be in better humour. The loweſt farthing was eight ſhillings: too little for a Nightingale-Sparrow; too much for a common Sparrow, let it be ever ſo tame.

A

FRAGMENT

UPON THE

Diſcovery of a Conſpiracy againſt the King in 1696.

IN order to underſtand well the importance of the King's Life, we muſt conſider, that Spain founded on him the firſt hopes of deliverance from her misfortunes; that the States gave him the power he has in Holland for having ſav'd them; that the Confederates have ſet him up as an Umpire in the Confederacy from the need they had of his Forces, and the confidence they plac'd in his Virtue. They ſaw a Prince always diſpoſed to undertake, always ready to execute; capable of ſucceeding in the greateſt deſigns by his conduct, of overcoming the greateſt difficulties by his vigour; as moderate in proſperity, as firm and conſtant in diſgraces; lov'd and eſteem'd in his own Army, eſteem'd and fear'd

in

in that of the enemy; more affected with Glory, than with his own particular Intereſt; more touch'd with the Intereſt of the publick, than with Glory.

A

LETTER

TO

MADAM DE L'ENCLOS.

I Have received the ſecond Letter which you writ me, which is obliging, agreeable, and witty, and in which I find the humour of NINON[1], and the good ſenſe of *Madam* DE L'ENCLOS. I knew how the former lived, and I learn from you, after what manner the other lives. Every thing contributes to make me regret the happy time which I have ſpent in your company, and to deſire in vain to ſee you once more. I have not ſtrength enough to tranſport my ſelf over to France, and you have allurements there, which will hinder you from coming to England. The Dutcheſs of BOUILLON can tell you that England has its charms, and I ſhould be ungrateful my ſelf, if I did not own that I have met with pleaſures and comforts in it. I am not a little pleaſed to hear that the Count DE GRAMMONT has recover'd his former health, and acquired a new Devotion. Hitherto I have been contented with being a good plain honeſt man; but I muſt do ſomething more, and I only wait for your example to become godly. You live in a Country where people have wonderful advantages of

[1] *Madam de L'Enclos's chriſten'd Name, by which ſhe went when ſhe was young.*

of ſaving their Souls. There vice is almoſt as much againſt the faſhion, as againſt virtue: ſinning paſſes for ill-breeding, and ſhocks decency and good manners as much as Religion. Formerly it was enough to be wicked, but now one muſt be withal a ſcoundrel, to be damn'd in France. They who have not regard enough for another life, are led to ſalvation by the conſiderations and duties of this. But there is enough upon a ſubject, in which the Converſion of the Count DE GRAMMONT has engag'd me: I believe it to be ſincere and honeſt. It well becomes a man who is not young, to forget that he has been ſo. This is what I could never yet arrive to; on the contrary, from the remembrance of my younger years, and the memory of my paſt vivacity, I endeavour to animate and enliven the ſluggiſhneſs of my old age. What I find the moſt troubleſome at this Age, is, that hope is loſt; hope, which is the ſweeteſt of all the paſſions, and that which contributes moſt to make us paſs our time agreeably. That which gives me the greateſt pain, is my deſpairing ever to ſee you: I muſt ſit down ſatisfied with writing to you ſometimes, in order to keep up a Friendſhip, which has reſiſted the length of time, the diſtance of place, and the uſual coldneſs of old Age. This laſt word regards me; nature will begin with you, to ſhow, that it is poſſible not to grow old. Pray let the Duke of LAUZUN know that I am his moſt humble Servant; and enquire whether Madam the Mareſchale DE CREQUI has paid him the five hundred Crowns that he lent me; I have been told by Letter a long time ago that ſhe has, but I am not very ſure of it.

The End of the Second Volume.

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